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Fall 2009

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SP firemen recall
the magnificent
cab-forwards



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cab-forward 4233 at
Alturas, Calif., 1955

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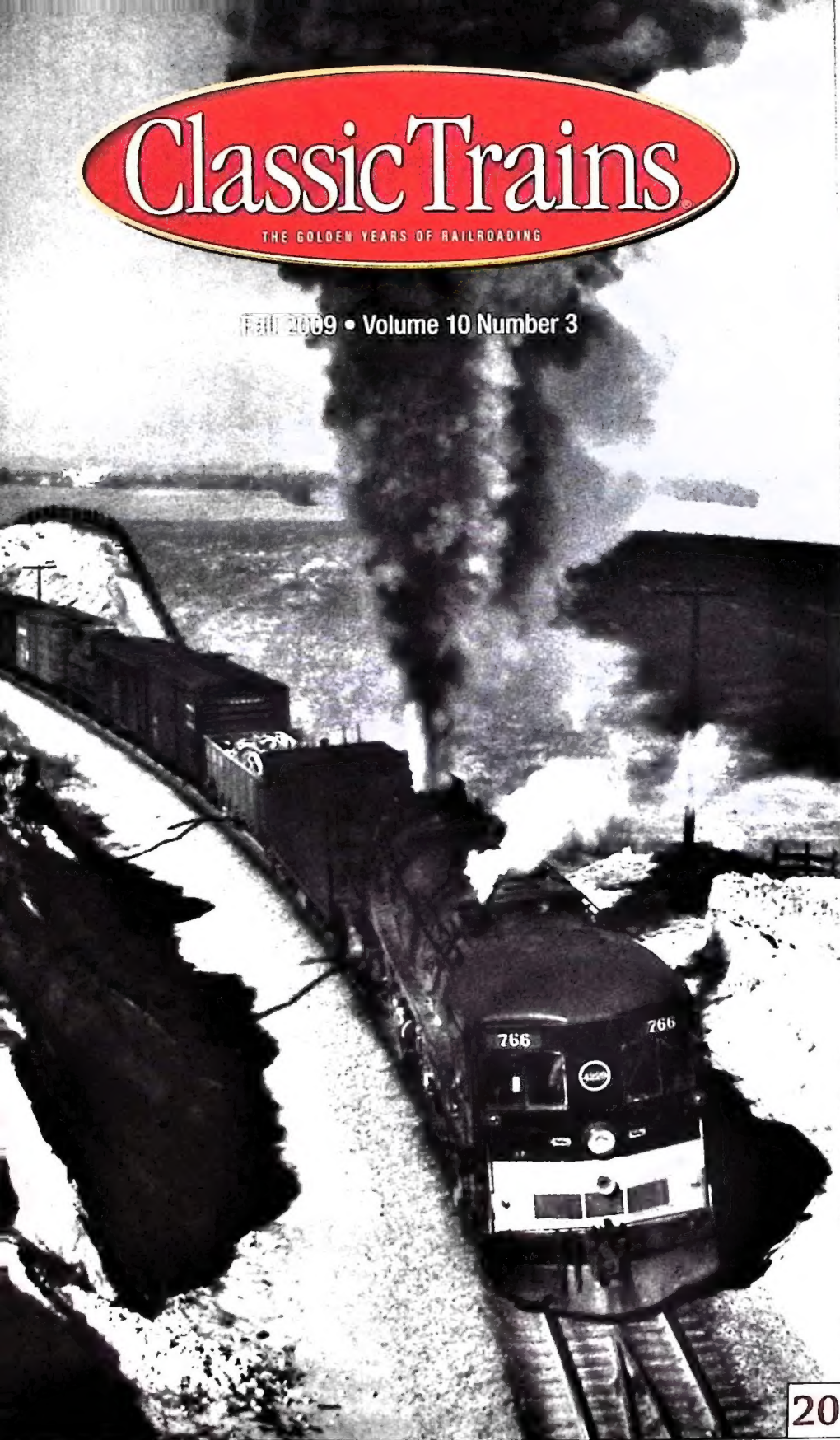


Vol. 10 • Issue 3

ClassicTrains

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

Fall 2009 • Volume 10 Number 3



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Tales from the Front: Three SP firemen recall the legendary cab-forward locomotives

On the cover: Southern Pacific AC-10 cab-forward 4-8-8-2 No 4233, on train 551, does some switching at Alturas, Calif., on the remote Modoc Line on August 29, 1955 (see page 20). *Henry R. Griffiths photo, Jim Griffiths collection.*



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Secondhand U.S. engines at work in Mexico



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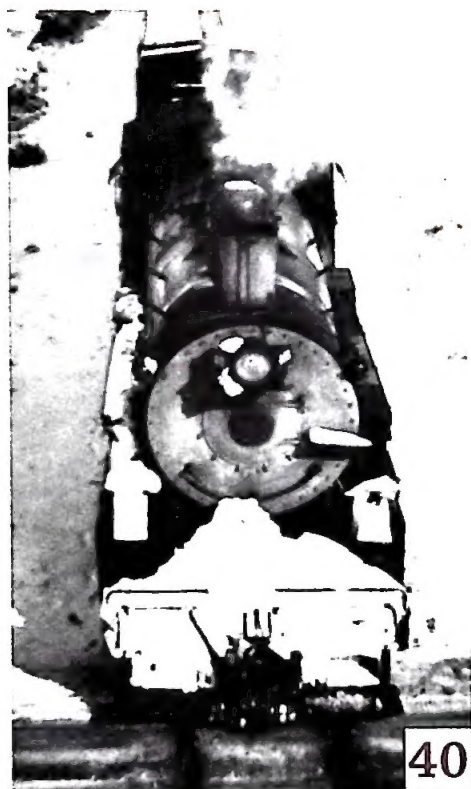
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Contributors



Barry Anderson ["Remembering the Malleys," pages 22-26] has been a railfan and model railroader for more than 50 years and counts himself fortunate to have grown up in California when steam was still king. His earliest memories date from about age 4 when his dad would take him down to the SP depot. Despite his initial enthusiasm (that's him, all smiles, on Malley 4158), he did not stick with railroading. After graduating from San Jose State College, he became a Navy pilot, then a purser on a cruise ship before settling down to a career as a freelance travel writer. He is married with two grown children and has lived in the Pacific Northwest since the 1960's. He and his wife, Hilda, retired to Port Townsend, Wash., several years ago. They still travel extensively and take as many trips as possible by rail. This is Barry's fifth byline in a CLASSIC TRAINS publication.

Gary M. Bonine ["Fort Worth & Denver Days," pages 40-47], a native of Pasadena, Calif., as a youngster lived next to the Santa Fe. During 1942-45, he lived in Fort Worth, and his family settled in Abilene in 1945. After college, he hired on in 1962 with SP, became a conductor in 1969, and transferred to engine service soon thereafter. He was promoted to engineer in 1972, working out of Sanderson, Texas, until it closed as a terminal in 1995. Gary and his wife, Margie, live in El Paso, where he retired from the Union Pacific in 2007. He thanks Richard Lohse and Larry Bergen for help with his old negatives, and also Lou Jean Swindell of Abilene for the "Green Frog Café" name. Gary's ad in the Abilene paper seeking friends or relatives of Messrs. Ladd and Little elicited no responses, but Mrs. Swindell said she had once lived in Stamford and gone to school with Mr. Ladd's son; she, too, had many FW&D engine rides. This is Gary's first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

Preston Cook ["The Case of the Black Marias," pages 72-77] is a mechanical engineer who has worked for four decades in the railroad

equipment business. During his employment by two locomotive builders, he has served in a variety of service, training, and sales jobs. He is an active photographer, has participated in company advertising and annual report photography, and particularly enjoys night photography of railroad, marine, industrial, and cityscape scenes. Preston has authored four books and a number of magazine articles on railroad, model railroad, military, marine, and travel subjects (including, under the pseudonym Win Cuisinier, stories on the Black Marias in the May-June 1972 *Extra 2200 South* and Summer 1975 *Railfan* magazine). Preston thanks Bill Abbott, Howard Pincus, Bob McCaffrey, and George Marks for helping make this article, his first in CLASSIC TRAINS, possible.

Bob Freese ["My 'Love-Hate' Relationship with Cab-Forwards," pages 30-31] left railroading in 1957 for a sales career. Retired since 1992, he lives in Belen, N.Mex. This is Bob's second article with us, following "Augmenting on SP's Coast Division" in Fall 2005.



J. David Ingles ["Storming the Steel City," pages 60-71], Senior Editor of CLASSIC TRAINS, has been back to Pittsburgh more than a dozen times since his 1962 exploration. **Jerry A. Pinkepank**, of Seattle, does railroad consulting work on a part-time basis. They both thank western Pennsylvania residents Lee Gregory, Dave Hamley, and Bill Metzger, plus Californian (and ex-Pittsburgher) Ken Douglas, for their assistance in correcting assumptions and updating items from Jerry's 1962 trip report. Ingles also thanks author Fred Frailey and friend Rick Moser for help with the information accompanying the KCS photos in "Workin' on the Railroad" [pages 78-79].

Stan Kistler ["One Day at . . . Zacatecas, Mexico," pages 32-37], a native of Pasadena, Calif., who grew up around the Santa Fe, made his first train photo in 1943 and, despite the fine 35mm Kodachromes in his Zacatecas article, remains a champion of black-and-white



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photography. He still does his own darkroom work, although he has retired from a 55-year career in photo labs, commercial and industrial photography, and graphic arts. His photos have appeared in many railroad books and magazines, and this is his sixth byline in *CLASSIC TRAINS*. In 1996 Stan received the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society's Railroad History Award for Photography. He was a charter member of the original Santa Fe Railway Historical Society, whose successor organization has just published his book, *Stan Kistler's Santa Fe in Black and White*. Stan and his wife, Brenda, have lived in Grass Valley, Calif., since 1979; he thanks Frank Barry for helping jog his memory and supplying some data for the Zacatecas article.

C. K. "Ken" Marsh Jr. ["Georgia Railroad: A Good and Unique 'Family' Member," pages 16-19] took his first train ride, in 1941, on a Georgia Road mixed. A graduate of the University of Tennessee's transportation program, Ken is retired from a 40-year logistics career with the Army Transportation Corps, then Louisville & Nashville Railroad, and finally Eastman Kodak/Eastman Chemical Co. He is a lifelong railroad historian and photographer, and recently he has also been active in transportation planning with the State of Tennessee. He and his wife, Patsy, live in Kingsport, Tenn., and Ken is serving a third term as a city alderman. This is his sixth byline in *CLASSIC TRAINS*, one of which [Fall 2005] was the "Fallen Flags Remembered" entry on the Clinchfield Railroad.

Dan Ranger ["Cab-Forward as Classroom," pages 27-29] grew up in Wellsville, N.Y. After his stint on the SP, he moved on to preserved railroads with steam operations. He's a former general manager of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic, and is now executive director of the Tourist Railway Association, Inc. Dan has written several articles for *TRAINS*, including a 20-page treatise on cab-forwards [August 1968] and a series of columns during 2007-09, but this is first piece in *CLASSIC TRAINS*. He lives in Chama, N.Mex.



Jim Shaughnessy ["The Jumping Goose," pages 38-39], of Troy, N.Y., is a prolific railroad author and photographer who still gets out to add to his large file of negatives and slides. "The Shaughnessy Files" appears in each issue of *CLASSIC TRAINS*. **1**

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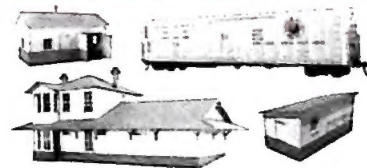
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True Color



Men in blue

Three Northern Pacific men—dressed in the blue denim that in 1955 was nearly universal among railroaders—gather beside the A-B-A set of F-unit diesels on Portland–Seattle train 407 during its stop at Tacoma Union Station. Engineer Art Hull looks toward the camera, which is held by fellow NP hogger Tom Miller. Tacoma Division Road Foreman of Engines Glen Staheli, his rank signified by a necktie and felt hat, appears to be greeting the arriving, unidentified fireman with a remark along the lines of, “Where have you been?”

Tom Miller photo, Stephen Thompson collection





Clifford A. Redanz

Approaching the station at Rahway, N.J., GG1's 4856 and 4839 have eastbound freight DJ-2 in hand in this August 1964 view from Union Tower.

Making the connection

For many years, I've enjoyed letters from your readers about how special memories are evoked by stories and photos in *CLASSIC TRAINS*. Now it's my turn, thanks to Linn Westcott's wonderful 1954 shot of Montreal's Côte St. Paul car barn in "Car Stop" [pages 88–89, Summer]. My mother was born across the street from this location in 1909. As a teenager, she met my father, who lived a few blocks away, on a wintertime skating rink that was set up in a vacant lot—on which this car barn later was built! After I was born, in 1944, we often went to visit my grandparents, by streetcar of course. I was an intensely interested spectator from 1946 to 1950, when my grandparents moved.

As if the car barn wasn't enough, this "Tramway Twilight in Montreal" photo spread included an electrified CN commuter train. In 1948, my father bought a house in Deux-Montagnes, two blocks from CN's end-point station, so he could commute to his job downtown Montreal. My dad would take me along the station platform and watch the elderly CN electric move to the opposite end of the train for its return inbound trip—my

very first close encounters with trains.

The city block that was entirely occupied by the Côte St. Paul car barn now is filled with apartment buildings, but the houses where my mom and dad were born still stand.

Pierre-André Rolland, Gatineau, Que.

G, what a way to start!

Your Summer issue was the first of my subscription, and the GG1 section was good karma, as I am the son of PRR parents. (Dad was a passenger conductor and Mom held a wide range of jobs from crew dispatcher to public address announcer.) The first train I ever "ran" was by sitting in the lap of engineer Harry Breevort in a GG1, and he was kind enough to let me think I was really holding the throttle myself. On trips later with Dad, I would look forward to getting a chance to ride in "the motor," but I usually got my own room on a sleeper. This issue is a keeper, and the GG1 centerspread illustration will be framed and hung on my wall.

Marty DeRosa, Monroe, N.Y.

The lead GG1 article with the timeline ["A Wonderful Life," by Robert S.

McGonigal, pages 20–29] is the most compact history of this great machine I have ever read, and the fourth article, by Jack Neiss ["The GG1 and Me . . . a Hoghead's Story," pages 38–42], could not have been more informative.

As a commuter in the 1960's and '70's, I watched the morning and evening parades of trains from track 5 in Newark's Penn Station. On rare occasions, a G's door would be left ajar, but no light would be on, so finally, for me, the mystery of what lay inside a G's nose has been revealed by Rick Johnson's excellent centerspread illustration ["Anatomy of a Motor," pages 50–51].

I can still hear the G's gears meshing as a train departed Newark.

Chuck LeFever, Locust, N.J.

The GG1 was ugly, yet it was beautiful! It gave this railfan, despite living along and being a fan of the Lackawanna, great inspirations and impressions of trains and railroading. Family friends lived in Iselin, N.J., so visits there drew me to the PRR main line and its parade of G's in full flight in all services. In July 1950, from a seat in left field at Connie Mack Stadium to watch the Cleveland

Indians play the Philadelphia Athletics, I watched G's going in and out of North Philadelphia. There were other impressions, but the biggest was when, one day at Penn Station, a trainman jumped up onto the platform from between a G and a baggage car and asked me if I liked trains. After receiving my obvious answer, he told me to wait as he disappeared onto the GG1, reappearing with a PRR kerosene lantern, which he handed to me! That light has led me through my railfan career for over 50 years.

Henry Sommers, Vestal, N.Y.

You can imagine how thrilled I was in 1947 when, at age 13, I rode the cab of a G pulling a "Clocker" from Broad Street Station in Philadelphia to Penn Station in New York. It was on a par with the baseball autographed by Ted Williams that I got the same year. The ink of Ted's signature has long since faded, but the memory of standing behind the engineer during the 80-mph dash down Pennsy's busy four-track main has not.

James Ransom, San Diego, Calif.

The GG1 was ever-present in the first 38 of my now 66-plus years. My first taste was in a late '40's Lionel catalog and the Wanamaker's department store Christmas 1948 train display in Philadelphia. It was instant love and fascination, sustained to this day.

One sleety night in the winter of 1969, as a Pennsylvania State Policeman, I was westbound on patrol on Route 230, parallel to the Pennsy Main Line near Mount Joy, in Lancaster County. The night was constantly lit up with blue-white flashes reflecting off the fog and clouds, although there was no accompanying thunder. I'd never seen anything like it. Soon, any question I had of the source was dramatically answered as a GG1 passed me, pulling varnish toward Harrisburg, with both pantographs raised. The flashes were blinding, so much so that I had to look away.

Another time at the same location, during good weather on a clear night, I was doing the limit of 60 mph on the limited-access highway when a westbound G effortlessly pulled up alongside me and then glided away into the night, pulling a string of Tuscan red passenger

cars. I tried to pace the train but thought better of it, as I was still not catching up to that G at 70 mph.

Alan MacNutt, Harrisonburg, Va.

Remembering Rahway

As a teenage paperboy in Rahway, N.J., my route paralleled the PRR main line. I would watch in awe as the beautiful GG1's would carry their passengers and freight to and from New York City. Editor Rob McGonigal's photo on page 92 [with Bill Metzger's essay "Steam Was in the GG1's Genes," in "Second Section"] is a memory shared by thousands of New York-bound commuters as each morning they would watch the G's come through Rahway station.

Richard Sinnott, Canton, Ga.

Giving Dohner due credit

Thank you for giving such prominence—and on the cover, no less—to Hampton C. Wayt's fascinating article, "Donald Dohner: The Man Who Designed 'Rivets'" [pages 30–35]. This piece exposes the oft-overlooked fact that Raymond Loewy did not design the GG1 and conclusively establishes Dohner's role in the G's design, and as such is a landmark article. The model illustrations are marvelous!

Although he likely would never have admitted it, maybe not even to himself, Loewy was more adept at redesign than pure design, as attested by his early work for Gestetner, Sears/Coldspot, Coca-Cola, and on the GG1. Loewy's personal flamboyance, as Wayt confirms, often translated into designs that were highly idiosyncratic—almost cartoonish at times—and have dated badly, especially when compared with the contemporary but more enduring work of "rival" designers such as Henry Dreyfuss. Loewy's reputation for crediting his "firm" (in reality, himself) with public successes at the expense of those on his staff who actually did the work led to Virgil Exner, Carl Louis Otto, and other notable industrial designers striking out from under Loewy's smothering shadow.

Kevin Holland, Burlington, Ont.

Joe Szraga: the man in the white hat

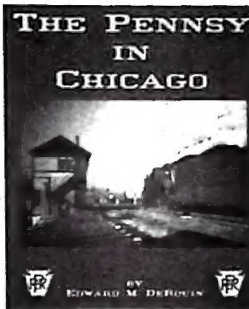
Having retired from New Jersey Transit after 40 years, I'd been around

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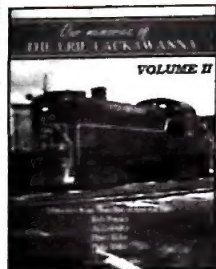
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Fast Mail

the GG1's a lot—I started my career at South Amboy as a signalman on the Raritan River bridge. I was working, handing up orders, on the last run of that marvelous motor in October 1983. I only had a short ride in one, less than a mile, but I had the honor of knowing two men who ran the G's: Cliff Underwood and Joe Szraga [page 45]. Joe wore a white hat year round.

Robert A. Fuller, Wilson, N.C.

All your stories on the GG1's 75th anniversary were great, and I particularly enjoyed Jack Neiss's "hoghead" tale. The article that really hit home, though, was Karl Zimmermann's "Two Ways to Skin a G" [pages 44–49].

In May 1982, friend Don Ellison and

I, both Chicagoans, were privileged to ride a round trip aboard GG1 4873 between Penn Station and South Amboy, N.J. Our engineer was Joe Szraga, a real gentleman and truly "a PRR man." Al Bucholz from NJ Transit, another great guy, took care of our releases to ride, and also gave us a quick tour of the Penn Station Stationmaster's office. He then took us down to the platform and delivered us to Mr. Szraga, his fireman, and the 4873. It was the cab ride of a lifetime—the smooth ride at 80 mph and the *bamp* sounds of that horn, the contactors popping, the incredibly cramped cab, and Joe's hospitality—all something we'll never forget. I have my late dad to thank for the ride. He was Local Chairman for Soo Line carmen

'Super Fleet' by Fawell

The story in Spring 2008 CLASSIC TRAINS on artist Tom Fawell ["The Bold Style of Tom Fawell," by Gregory Palumbo], as well as the follow-up note in Summer 2009 "Second Section" [page 94] on his Iowa Interstate Railroad artwork used in TRAINS, were of great interest to me. Growing up in the 1960's and '70's, I really enjoyed every Electro-Motive Division ad illustrated by Fawell. In 1975, I purchased one of the four prints he had for sale (a Santa Fe SD45-2), wishing I had the money for the other three. The print has been hanging in my house ever since.

After reading your 2008 article, I wrote Fawell to tell him how much I admired his work. Tom called me and later sent me all four original prints, inscribed personally! I had often wondered what an EMD ad would have looked like had Tom been painting for the builder's ads in 1990 when, during the Mike Haverty era, Santa Fe's "Warbonnet," or "Super Fleet" units began production. I talked with Tom about this, and we met for lunch in West Chicago. What followed was this painting (below) of Santa Fe's GP60M's, just as if EMD had commissioned the work. I am thrilled with it and grateful to your publications for opening the path that made it possible.

David F. Peck, Edmonds, Wash.



Tom Fawell illustration; collection of David Peck

If Santa Fe's "Super Fleet" dated from the Fawell era, might EMD's ad have looked like this?

at Schiller Park, Ill., and wrote to NJT telling them of my desire. NJT's prompt reply was, "Come on out."

Don and I also were present at the 4935's dedication ceremony in Washington on May 15, 1977. In William E. Hopkins' photo on page 47, I'm in the yellow shirt and Don is to my left, in the blue shirt.

Lou Gerard, Skokie, Ill.

The sounds of Flossmoor

Do you remember where and when your lifelong interest in trains began? I do, and it was captured wonderfully by J. David Ingles' photo on pages 8-9 as "Mid-American Trifecta" in "True Color." I grew up there in Flossmoor, Ill., and it was in that summer of 1974 that I awakened to the railroad drama.

As inspiring as the photo is, it doesn't capture the *sounds* of railroading abundant in Flossmoor. Amtrak's *Panama*

Limited is accelerating away from the Homewood station just over a mile away, and since there's a modest upgrade, those three E units and their six V-12 prime movers are straining against the force of gravity as well as inertia. The electric Highliners, at left, were fairly new and relatively quiet, and could sneak up on you.

Southbound freights would often be powered by four Geeps, which when accelerating uphill out of Markham Yard, would often reach the speed for transition right there at the photo spot. The resulting change in pitch and cadence is what drew me in and cemented my lifelong interest in railroading.

Edward Irons, Wheeling, Ill.

I'm always delighted when Dave Ingles pulls out a photo in territory with which I am familiar. I was in Illinois Central Gulf's Marketing Department in

1974 and worked in the group that developed services that were considered innovative for the time. From that experience I can report that the pictured unit train of tank cars was headed beyond Markham Yard a few miles to a siding near the Chicago Sanitary District's Calumet wastewater treatment plant. There the train would be loaded with, well . . . a product of the treatment process, and would be hauled south to Arcola, Ill., where the nitrogen-rich, soil-conditioning product was spread on farm fields.

In his *History of the Illinois Central Railroad*, John Stover notes that the train was sometimes called the "Green Thumb Express," an early use of "green" to describe something dealing with environmental issues.

Labeling the picture as a "trifecta," a popular pari-mutuel wager, reminded me of the old Washington Park nearby in Homewood. I began my rail career as

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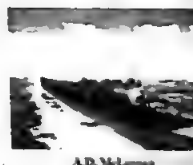
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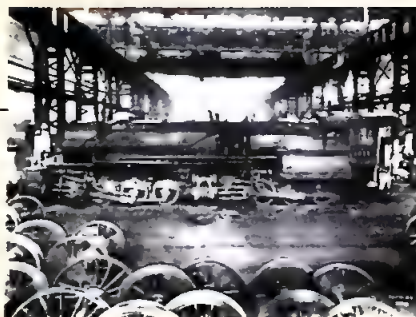
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Fast Mail

a trainman on IC's electric suburban service, and during racing season, I'd often be assigned to the specials that ran right to the back of the grandstand. Not two years after the date of Dave's photo, the all-wood grandstand and clubhouse burned to the ground, and with that, the track and the special train service were history.

Jay Eaton, Delavan, Wis.

Salida's Santa Claus

Regarding the "Hermit of Arborville" mentioned on page 78 in Robert A. Le Massena's "Quadrupling Cerro Summit" on his 1943 Colorado "tour," the hermit's name was Mr. Gimlet. My father, George Headington, was a foreman in the Rio Grande's Mechanical Department in Salida during 1951-63. Mr. Gimlet lived at Maysville, just west of Salida, and his sister, Mrs. Burk, was our landlady. He would come visit her, but I never saw him with a burro. The railroad would send a steam engine and a decorated caboose toward Marshall Pass to bring Santa Claus to Salida so youngsters could meet him, see a movie, and receive a sack of Christmas goodies. Santa was Mr. Gimlet, and I rode that caboose several times with him on those occasions.

*Linda E. Huskey
Grand Junction, Colo.*

Special trains to special events

New Jersey Transit has a special train operation similar to Peoria & Eastern's Indianapolis Speedway event ["When Race Fans Took the Train to the Indy 500," by Eric Powell, pages 52-57]. It occurs at the end of every October, on the Gladstone Branch, for the Far Hills Steeple Chase. I also remember Homecoming Day at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, in 1954. Illinois Central ran so many trains down from Chicago that they had to use freight steam engines on two of them.

Philip Martin, Kempton, Pa.

Heritage, or just business?

I was interested in Dave Ingles' "Pere Marquette 58: The Original 'Heritage Unit'?" [page 84, in "The Way It Was"], as I photographed that NW2 in Waverly Yard in Holland, Mich., in summer 1954. It had just come from the shop at C&O's Wyoming Yard in Grand Rapids

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wearing a fresh coat of paint, as shown in the 1961 photo. I could even smell the paint as I clicked the shutter.

I also puzzled over this issue and finally, about a year ago, wrote C&O Historical Society about PM 58. The reply stated that the equipment trust agreement required the unit keep the name and number as delivered until the unit was paid for. No sentimentality was involved, just a simple business decision.

Ron Chandler, Montrose, Pa.

¶ This would imply that only No. 58 of PM's 1946 order for 10 NW2's was not paid for until 1967, since No. 58 was the only unit among the 10 to remain in PM identity for almost a decade.—J.D.I.

L&NE 207 and friends

Thanks for Robert Mohowski's wonderful "Fallen Flags Remembered" piece on the Lehigh & New England [pages 16-19]. One of the pictures on page 18 shows a coal train going "north from Allentown." The Allentown branch had a dead end; I believe that coal train came off either the Jersey Central at Bethlehem or the Reading at Catasauqua, Pa.

I also was glad to see former L&NE 0-6-0 207 in the photo on page 94 [in "Second Section"] near Detroit. That was my favorite engine 60 years ago when it was regular power on the Catasauqua branch.

Bruce Steinbicker, Asheville, N.C.

¶ Yes, the Allentown branch dead-ended at the freight house, while the Bethlehem branch connected with the CNJ main between its Bethlehem station and Allentown Yard's east end.—Bob Mohowski

Winton Place: a decade of difference

A single picture makes your Summer issue worth more than gold to me—Mert Leet's shot on page 59 in "Photo Section" of Norfolk & Western's Powhatan Arrow easing into Winton Place, Cincinnati, on May 1, 1956. This is a glimpse of my youth—this hallowed station scene is still vivid to me, 53-years later. We always got to Winton Place ahead of time. Why? A 1945 schedule shows 22 passenger trains arriving there just between 6:19 and 9:26 a.m., plus there were freights. The place was busy all day long. Sadly, I compare this picture

to one I found on the Internet, of a PRR E8 leading a northbound train into Winton Place in 1967 on unkempt tracks. The disheveled depot, then painted red, has weed-infested platforms with landscaping overgrown. The contrast with Leet's shot of the Arrow—looking clean, with tracks the same and the station immaculate—is stark, and testifies to the disappearance of a proud passenger system in just a decade.

John C. Davis II
Port Townsend, Wash.

B&O conversions

I enjoyed reading Borgon Tanner's "I Was a Teenage Hostler" [pages 80-82, in "The Way it Was"], regarding his time with the B&O in Benwood, W.Va., and I offer a clarification. The Benwood turntable was only 115 feet long, the maximum length on the system. When B&O purchased the class EE-1 2-8-8-2's from Seaboard, they became class EL-6a's in B&O's 7300 series, and were 2-8-8-0's as B&O removed the two trailing wheels. With their original short, eight-wheel Vanderbilt tenders, the 7300's were only 106 feet, 5 inches long, but B&O had a habit of swapping tenders, and the EL-6a's may have ended up with either 12-wheel or long 8-wheel Vanderbilt tenders, which would explain the tight fit Tanner describes.

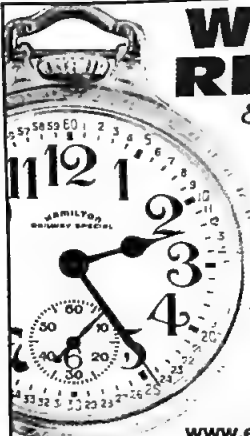
Dennis E. Elliott, Powell, Ohio

Summer stumbles

- Page 9: The northbound ICG sludge train is on track No. 4, the northbound passenger main. The southbound freight main, and its northbound counterpart, are in the shadows to the right.
- Page 10: The night photo at Chama, N. Mex., depicts 2-8-2 No. 489, not 499.
- Page 22: The GG1 in the "1938" box is 4862, not 4863.
- Pages 70-71: The Alco the MILW crew had was an RSC2, not an RSC2M. ■

Got a comment?

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A good and unique 'Family' member

In character, the Georgia Road was both a Class 1 hauler and a down-home short line

In its rich 150-year history, the Georgia Railroad was touched and torched by the rich and famous. During the process, the company morphed from a railroading pioneer and leader in the Peach State to an interesting combination of Class 1 and short-line operation.

Started as The Georgia Railroad in 1833, the ambitious company quickly hired one John Edgar Thomson as its chief engineer to design a railroad linking the navigable Savannah River at Augusta westward to the heart of the state at a point to be determined. Within a short time, the perennial clash of ambitious ideas and a paucity of money caused a significant rethinking. On January 12, 1836, the charter was amended to permit financial commerce as well as transportation by the Georgia Railroad & Banking Company. Banking proved just the ticket to financing the rail project, which by 1844 reached 171 miles across mid-Georgia to Marthasville or Terminus, later named Atlanta. Another railroad, the Western & Atlantic, later of Andrews Raiders fame, was already under construction from Terminus north toward the Tennessee River.

Political correctness entered into the enterprise, resulting in intermediate points being named for wealthy principals in the firm including Thomson, Dearing, and Camak. Engineer Thomson did an excellent job with his design. He managed to find a route that went west 80 miles to the Oconee River, west



Collection of C. K. Marsh Jr.

Mikado 321, one of seven mid-1920's Limas, storms out of Atlanta with train 2 in April 1950.

of Greensboro, without any type of bridging, even a culvert, being required. In a region laced by rivers and getting 47 inches of annual rainfall, that was quite an accomplishment. Thomson's later efforts in building and operating the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad across the Alleghenies, including Horse-shoe Curve, called on bridging and tunneling talents that were not called for in his first railroad endeavor.

Conceived to capture traffic on the Savannah River, to and from its namesake port, the Georgia Road, as the rail-

road came to be known, enhanced its franchise by a connection with the South Carolina Railroad at Augusta. This provided access to a second port at Charleston, S.C. The Western & Atlantic gave it access to the Tennessee River at Chattanooga, which commenced a century-long competition with the Central of Georgia Railroad, a firm which served most of the same key Peach State cities and also possessed a direct rail line to Savannah.

Cotton, along with other products of the plantations and forests, flowed



C. K. Marsh Jr.

In an everyday event, Atlanta-Augusta daytime passenger train 2, behind two F units, meets Geep-powered freight 209 on December 7, 1963.

toward Augusta and Savannah. Manufactured goods from the North and Europe moved inbound to partially balance tonnage flows. Early investments in the predecessors of the Atlanta & West Point Railway and its connection, the Western Railway of Alabama, soon provided an extended rail avenue via Atlanta into the heart of the South at Montgomery and Selma, Ala..

No sooner had the Georgia Road settled into a profitable and effective transportation link than the "Late Unpleasantness," i.e., the Civil War or War Between the States, swept over the nation. The dramatic increase in traffic during the hostilities came to an abrupt halt when Gen. William T. Sherman captured Atlanta and destroyed all rail terminals there, plus more than 80 miles of Georgia Railroad main line. All the way past Madison, Sherman's "scorched earth" policy was manifest in flames and destruction of rail, ties, the few bridges, and every lineside structure. Only the right of way remained.

It took more than a dozen years to heal the physical and financial damage. During that time the owners found banking more to their liking . . . and much more profitable. In 1881 they leased the Georgia Railroad jointly to the Louisville & Nashville and rival Central of Georgia. The Central soon lost its financial interest through a reorganization, giving the L&N uncontested control. Thus the Georgia Railroad and its related interests joined "The Family Lines" in the late 19th century.

Expansion via short and branch lines

To build traffic, especially lumber and farm goods, the company nurtured a number of short lines. They included the Union Point & White Plains ("U Push & We Pull"), Washington & Lincoln, Elberton & Eastern, Lexington Terminal, Milstead, and Milledgeville Railway. All succumbed to abandonment during the Great Depression or in the years following World War II as cotton faded and the forests were cut out.

Over the years, the Georgia Road's 171-mile main line expanded to a network totaling more than 300 route-miles. Several branches reached regional communities, the longest being "The Macon Road," which stretched 78 miles



south from Camak to Macon. The branches are what gave the Georgia its short-line character. Most were served by ancient or rebuilt 4-6-0's hauling mixed trains with Jim Crow combination cars. These trains, with their leisurely pace, gave the company a unique flavor, even into the diesel era.

By 1914 the Georgia Road was powered by an assortment of 4-4-0's, 0-6-0's, Moguls, Ten-Wheelers, four modern Lima 2-8-2's, and a pair of light Pacifics. A handful of all-steel baggage cars, RPO's, and coaches shared the car roster with a fleet of steel-underframe wooden passenger and freight cars.

The Georgia Road emerged from the USRA period (1918-20) with a small fleet of standard 2-8-2 and 0-8-0 locomotives, power that lasted past the Korean War. In addition, during 1920-42 some of the larger Ten-Wheelers were rebuilt, modernized, and renumbered. They handled the branches and secondary mainline assignments. Much of the non-rebuilt small power was retired soon after World War I, and most of the remaining engines were scrapped in the 1930's.

Some USRA-designed freight cars served the road until well after World War II. A newer group of steel boxcars were painted silver rather than the traditional red in an effort to spare freight-

handlers the searing heat of southern sunshine beating down on dark metal surfaces. The acquisition of four heavy 2-8-2's from sibling Clinchfield and a single 0-8-0 from the Detroit Terminal, plus four more rebuilt 4-6-0's, provided additional power for the war years and rounded out the steam roster.

Traffic generated on-line consisted primarily of forest products, clay, and gravel, plus cotton and cottonseed products. Coal, flour, lumber, petroleum, sugar, textiles, and miscellaneous manufactured goods came from connections, much of it "bridged" to other roads at

Atlanta or Augusta. In 1929, just over 100,000 carloads moved over the Georgia, which offered good connections with parents Atlantic Coast Line and L&N (controlled by ACL), plus other Family members at both ends.

Through freights 209, 210, and 211, train numbers mirroring similar numbers on parent Coast Line, plied Georgia's main line. Supplemented by a regular eastbound extra to balance motive power, these trains provided service roughly every 12 hours in each direction. Except for pickups and setouts at Camak, the junction with the Macon branch and the Savannah & Atlanta Railway, these trains moved bridge traffic between connecting roads at Atlanta and Augusta. Four local freights worked



Fallen Flags Remembered



C. K. Marsh Jr.



Collection of C. K. Marsh Jr.

In steam, Georgia had more 4-6-0's than any other type; 205 posed in Atlanta in March '52.

bound 2 and 4 departed Atlanta exactly 12 hours apart, at 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Their westbound companions left Augusta at 1:50 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. The night trains offered Pullman sleeper service between Augusta and Atlanta, along with through cars between Atlanta and both Charleston, S.C., and Wilmington, N.C., via the ACL. All four trains did a substantial express and mail business, with Railway Post Offices serving many intermediate points across Georgia. After the night trains were discontinued, Nos. 1 and 2 offered some of the last regular heavyweight passenger service in the South. No stainless steel or fancy paint routinely graced these workaday runs.

The first internal combustion road locomotive, F3 No. 1001, arrived in 1948 to cover four daily trips over the Macon Road. With the exception of a sole Baldwin DS-44-1000 switcher, the company replaced its 50-engine steam roster with 45 EMD's of models NW2, SW9, FP7, and GP's from '7 and '9 to '40-2 and '38-2, often bought in concert with close affiliates A&WP and WofA, known as the "West Point Route." After 1954 the four daily mainline passenger trains generally drew a single or pair of F units, while yard assignments at Atlanta and Augusta went to eight switchers; the Geeps handled everything else. Business went on quietly for almost three more decades except for the latter-day mixed trains, whose longevity earned the Georgia a relative high profile among enthusiasts.

Until 1966, the Georgia generally operated independent of the A&WP and WofA, although Georgia and West Point Route road diesels began to move more freely on either side of Atlanta. The first of 22 second-generation GP40's arrived



J. David Ingles

Mixed train 31 (top) leaves Camak for Macon on December 12, 1968, behind WofA GP9 531. On October 23, 1975 (above), Georgia coach 106, Budd-built in 1949 for WofA for use on the *Crescent*, trails WofA and GA GP40's, two GA GP7's, and a GP9 on mainline train 103 near Lithonia.

the mainline customers and fed the branch-line mixed trains. The Macon Road had its own set of daytime mixed and nighttime local freights.

Pulpwood, lumber, brick, and aggregates were the principal on-line commodities until Georgia Power built its giant generating plant on Lake Sinclair near Milledgeville in the early 1960's. Eventually the only reason for retaining the line was for unit coal trains from Kentucky. The 28-mile portion of the Macon Road west of Milledgeville was

abandoned in 1985. Coal became a key revenue source in the latter days of the Georgia and caused the last pioneer construction on the property. A long-planned one-mile connecting track at Camak allowed continuous movements of trains from Atlanta to Milledgeville and vice versa.

Varnish, from vanilla to unique mixeds

Mainline passenger service after 1945 consisted of daylight trains 1 and 2 and nocturnal trains 3 and 4. East-

in 1967, eventually 8 each for A&WP and WofA and 6 for the Georgia. They wore solid black, which had replaced the early dark blue-and-silver and a later solid blue.

Post-1966, the Georgia was steadily integrated into "The Family Lines," losing its unique characteristics. Railway Post Office service ended in 1967, after 120 years (broken only by the war years 1861-65). The night passenger trains were dropped, and soon the day trains were converted to mixeds, which lasted until 1983, a dozen years into the Amtrak era. (An exemption from *ad valorem* taxes in the Georgia's charter implied that it had to provide daily passenger service.)

Piggybacks, general freight, and even coal showed up on the "super mixeds," which would run 50 cars or more. The branch-line mixeds were curtailed, clearly signaling the beginning of the end. On November 4, 1982, the Georgia, oldest member of the Family Lines, was acquired by Seaboard Coast Line, which filed to end the mixeds. On January 1, 1983, SCL and other "Family" members became Seaboard System Railroad. The branch-line mixeds ended on April 29, 1983, and the mainline runs on May 6.

Only three years later, Seaboard joined Chessie System to become the CSX that blankets the nation east of the Mississippi. The old Georgia Road main line continues to connect segments of CSX, but little remains of the old down-home character and flavor. ■

GEORGIA FACT FILE

(comparative figures are for 1928 and 1981)

Route-miles: 329; 329

Locomotives: 68; 31

Passenger cars: 72; 2

Freight cars: 1,512; 810

Headquarters city: Atlanta, Ga.

Special interest group: Atlantic Coast

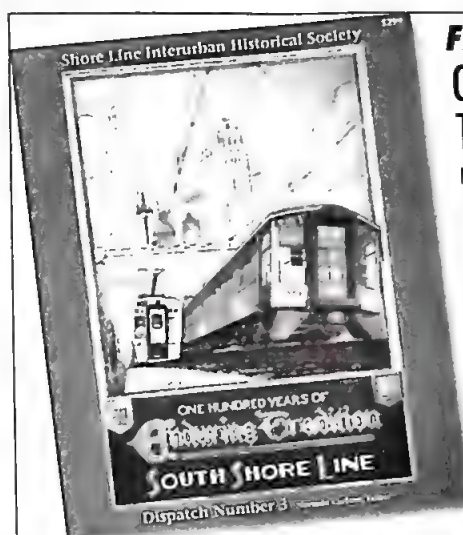
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Source: *Historical Guide to North American Railroads* (Kalmbach, 2000)



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COVER STORY

Tales from the front

Three Southern Pacific firemen recall
good times and bad aboard the legendary
cab-forward 4-8-8-2 locomotives





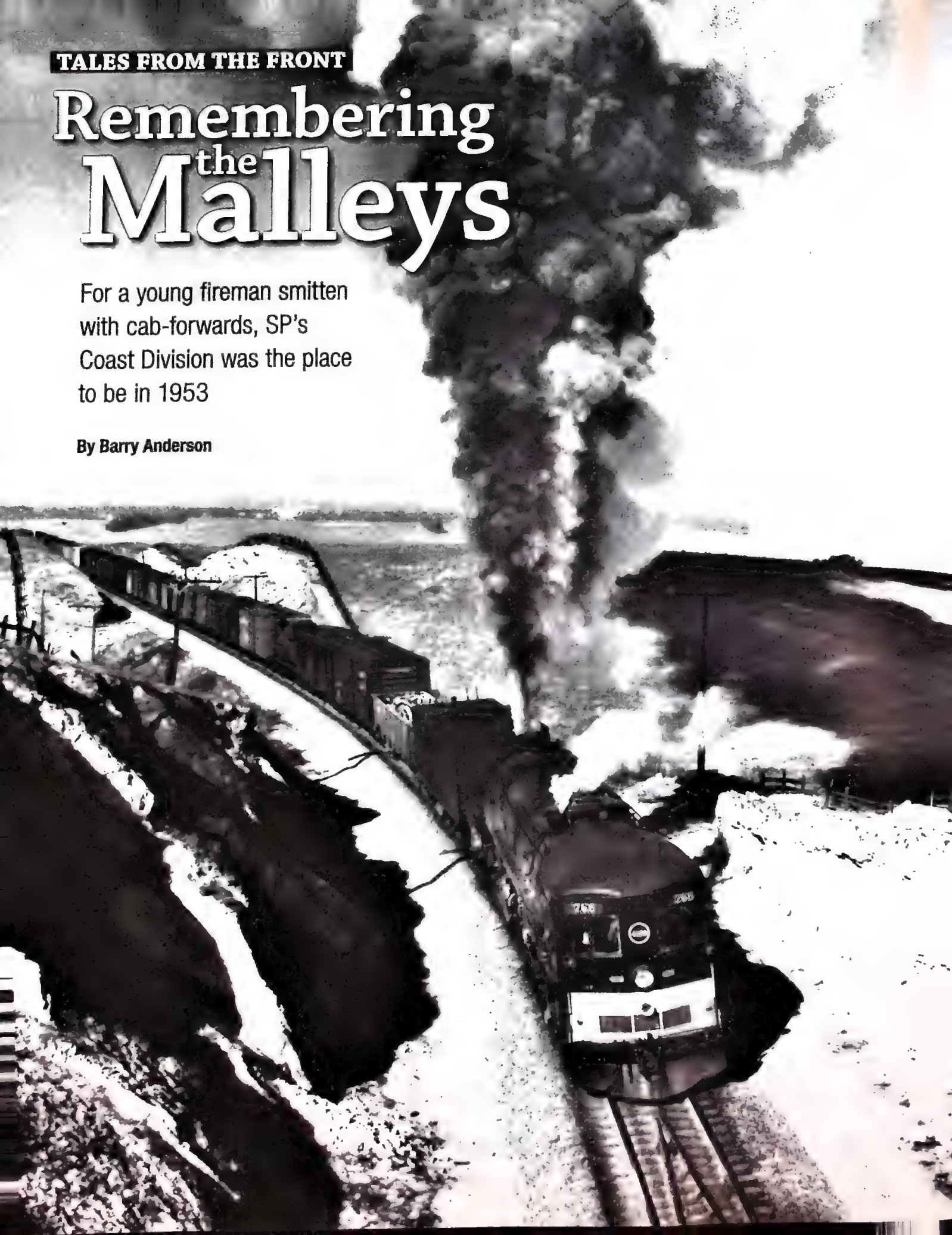
The fireman on SP cab-forward 4180 eyes photographer Robert Hale, pacing the train in an auto through Altamont Pass, Calif., in the 1950's. The man visible through the front windows is likely the head-end brakeman.

TALES FROM THE FRONT

Remembering the Malleys

For a young fireman smitten
with cab-forwards, SP's
Coast Division was the place
to be in 1953

By Barry Anderson



My love affair with Southern Pacific's cab-forwards began in the late 1940's, when I was a teenage railfan growing up on the San Francisco Peninsula. I'd seen them occasionally in the mountains on family vacations to Lake Tahoe and trips north to Mount Shasta, but never "up close and personal."

Then, as hundreds of new F-unit diesels arrived on the SP, they began to displace the cab-forwards from their traditional stomping grounds. First, the older "flat-front" AC-4's, 5's, and 6's were bumped off the Portland and Shasta divisions and the Modoc line. Then the more modern AC-7 to AC-12 classes (excepting the AC-9's, which were rear-cab 2-8-8-4's built as coal-burners to work in New Mexico) were displaced from Donner and Tehachapi passes, showing up in increasing numbers on the Coast and Western divisions.

Many a warm summer night I lay in bed with the window open, savoring the distinctive whistle of an AC-powered freight heading up or down the Peninsula. Cab-forwards became regular power on the freights bound for Tracy by way of Altamont Pass.

Finally, in 1953 I became old enough to go firing. The Coast Division was still almost entirely steam, and firing promised high adventure. My first student road trip was the regular night extra for Watsonville Junction, called for 10:30 p.m. from Bayshore, SP's big yard just south of San Francisco.

I met my engineer, Denny Allison, at the roundhouse. With an "OK, kid, let's go; we've got a Malley tonight," we headed off for the ready track. (A note here: In the years I worked for the SP, I never heard the terms *cab-forward*, *cab-ahead*, or *cab-in-front* used by engineers. We called them Malleys or by their number series—4100's or 4200's. Although SP's 2-6-6-2 and 2-8-8-2 cab-forwards of the 1910's were compound Mallets, these were retired or rebuilt as simple articulateds, and the 4-8-8-2 cab-forwards of 1928-44 were simple; nevertheless, the nickname Malley stuck to the end.)

There's a magic about a roundhouse alive with steam at night. The flicker of a firebox illuminating the darkness, black looming shapes quietly hissing steam, the pounding of air pumps breaking the stillness. And, there, huge in the inky night, stood our power, AC-

10 No. 4243, its twin air pumps sounding that whistling *phew-phew* distinctive to all the AC's.

There seemed to be a bewildering amount to learn, but I couldn't have had a better teacher. Allison and his regular fireman were patient to a fault. As they showed me around, I tried to memorize everything they were telling me, knowing I'd be on my own soon enough.

We climbed to the cab and put our lunch and overnight bags in the seat-boxes. With the head brakeman occupying the extra seat by the front windows, I'd be riding on the sandbox tonight. (All oil-fired engines carried a supply of sand in the cab to be tossed into the firebox periodically in order to clear the flues of oil residue.)

I noticed the fireman place his pint whiskey bottle full of coffee on the steam manifold to keep it hot. (Note to self: Obtain an empty whiskey bottle to carry coffee.) His preparations for the run continued: Set the firing pin to the spot-fire position on the firing valve. Drain the water glass and test the gauge cocks. Open the firebox door, kneel down and peer through the flames to check for leaking staybolts and soft plugs. Turn the tank heater on. Walk back and climb onto the deck behind the smokebox to check the lubricators on the air pumps and the feedwater pump. Climb up onto the tender, open the valve releasing air pressure from the oil tank (thus avoiding a faceful of bunker C), check the measuring rod for fuel, and don't forget to close the valve to repressurize the tank. (Later that year I had an embarrassing experience forgetting to close that valve, resulting in no fire and a precarious trek along the running board at speed to close the valve.) Check the water level, supply of water treatment chemicals, and the electric marker lights. Light a white kerosene lantern and hang it from the hook on the rear of the tender.

Back in the cab, we hosed down the deck with the steam hose, then checked that the water pump and injector were working. We were running as Extra 4243 East tonight, so the fireman told me to insert the proper numbers in the drop-down indicator boxes and turn the classification lights to white. Lastly, give the engine a good blow-down to drain sediment from the boiler.

We soon left the ready track, picked up the head brakeman, and backed down to our train, a short 35 cars tonight, but we'd get more at San Jose. My first impression as we moved past Visitation tower, picked up our orders, and pulled out onto the main, was how out-in-front the cab of an AC was. Visi-

A roar from the firebox filled the cab. Then the fireman shouted at me, "Give 'er some juice!"

bility was much greater than on any of today's diesels because there was *nothing* in front of the windows, just a straight drop to the tracks.

We made an uneventful trip down the Peninsula to San Jose Yard, took water (and pie at the popular beanery), filled out our train, and headed for Watsonville Junction as Second 938. One other impression from that first trip was just how big and robust these engines were. When I got a chance to take over the firing, we were just passing through the spring switch at Coyote and starting up Morgan Hill. Denny Allison stood up and shoved the throttle toward the backhead (shorter engineers often handled the throttle standing up and facing backward because they could get more leverage than from a seated position). A roar from the firebox filled the cab. The fireman shouted at me, "Give 'er some juice!" Relying on my limited experience on switch engines, I timidly opened the firing valve, whereupon clouds of gas belched from the firebox as the fire became starved for oil. The fireman reached over and yanked the valve halfway across the quadrant, saying, "No, like this!" Next I opened the feedwater valve, increased the atomizer, and turned off the blower.

With the increased draft through the firebox, it was time to sand the flues. Because the regular fireman and I were busy trying to keep the steam and water up, the head brakeman shoveled a few scoopfuls of sand through the firedoor peephole. Looking back along the boiler, I could see clouds of black smoke rolling across adjacent Highway 101.

Lesson at Tunnel 6

After that first trip, I got to fire four more cab-forwards—Nos. 4196, 4287, 4211, and 4253—on my four days of student trips to the end of the division at Santa Barbara and back. Among my

South of Guadalupe, Calif., on the Coast Line, "Malley" 4229 climbs Casamilla Hill in 1947. Shortly the train will be on the bluffs above the Pacific Ocean, beginning 100 miles of seaside running toward Los Angeles.



memories of that student week, Tunnel 6 stands out. The *raison d'être* for the cab-forward was, of course, to keep the crew ahead of the smoke in the tunnels and snowsheds of the Sierras. That works well in theory, but it's a moot point when you're on the third and rear-most engine of a hundred-car train slogging upgrade at less than 10 mph.

I was making one of my student trips on the 4211, on this occasion the second helper on a heavy eastbound drag climbing from Santa Margarita to the top of Cuesta Grade on the Coast Division. As we coupled on ahead of the caboose, the

regular fireman handed me a strange-looking sheet-metal cone with a hose protruding from it. "Here," he said, "You'll need this for Tunnel 6." As instructed, I soaked cotton waste in water from the drinking cooler, stuffed it into the cone, and plugged the hose into an outlet from the engine's air reservoir.

Enginemen are inveterate storytellers, especially when it comes to razzing a new fireman. As we started out of the siding at Santa Margarita, the fireman felt the need to relate in gruesome detail the November 19, 1941, tragedy of Chatsworth Tunnel on the Los Angeles

AC-10 No. 4210 leans against an eastbound freight climbing Donner Pass at Andover, Calif. By the time of this September 1954 photo, diesels had taken over as road power on The Hill, but AC's still worked as helpers.

Division. On that day, Extra 4193 West (a Malley) was working uphill through the 7,369-foot tunnel with a 96-car train. The engine stalled. Then, while trying to start, the train broke in two, setting the brakes in emergency. In the dense smoke and heat, the inexperienced fireman panicked, opened the firing valve, spilling hot oil on the track,



David G. Edwards

which caught fire. The fire incinerated the two enginemen, the head brakeman, and 12 cars of cattle. Just the story to tell a green fireman heading into Tunnel 6 for the first time!

Our Malley was working hard all the way upgrade. We plunged into the 3,610-foot tunnel and were immediately engulfed in hot steam and smoke from the two engines ahead of us. Even with all the cab lights on, I could barely see the engineer. The sound of our exhaust bouncing off the tunnel ceiling was so deafening I couldn't hear the fireman as he shouted in my ear. Breathing cooler

air from the respirator helped some, but not knowing how long we'd be in the tunnel was a terrifying experience I shall never forget.

AC pluses and minuses

I had the good fortune to fire many more cab-forwards during the next three years. With a four-wheel front truck right under the cab, they rode smoothly at the lower speeds of most drag freights. They would get up and move when called upon, but the ride became considerably worse. On the long downgrade from Gilroy to Coyote, for example, we'd often reach 50 mph or so, but the ride got so rough you could hardly read the gauges for the bouncing.

The Malleys fired differently from rear-cab engines. The fireman's controls and gauges were located on the right-hand side of his position in an AC. At first, it seemed strange to fire sitting sideways with my back to the window, but it was much easier to keep an eye on the water glass and steam pressure and to look rearward to the light at the stack to check smoke density. You couldn't see the engineer (and thus change your firing settings in response to changes in throttle or reverse). Helpful hoggers would shout across the cab when they were about to make a move.

The forward windows provided terrific visibility, but that cab was no place to be if you had a grade-crossing accident. Another advantage was the quick access the head brakeman had to drop off and throw a siding switch.

However, having the cab in front was a distinct disadvantage when backing up, since the distance between the crew and the rear coupler was much greater than on a conventional engine. On one occasion, Roseville gave us the 4215 for what amounted to a local freight to Gerber via Davis on the West Valley Subdivision. I spent most of the day listening to the engineer's curses wrestling the big engine into spurs and sidings as we dropped off and picked up cars at stops all the way up the valley.

None of the roundhouses on the Coast Division had a turntable long enough to turn a cab-forward. As hostlers, we turned them on the wyes at San Luis Obispo, Watsonville Junction, San Jose, and Mission Bay. On arrival at Bayshore, the hostler ran the engine the 5 miles up to Mission Bay, turned on the wye around Potrero Tower, and returned to Bayshore. Turning an AC meant at least one leg backing up with some 120 feet of engine and tender obscuring your view. Fortunately, I never had any accidents, but others occasion-

In the tunnel, we were immediately engulfed in hot steam and smoke from the engines ahead of us.

ally ran through closed switches.

One of the distinct benefits for a brand-new railfan-fireman was that I had absolutely no seniority. All I could hold was the extra board and as the agricultural business (mainstay of the Coast Division) fluctuated with the various harvests, I found myself laid off more than once. Other divisions were hiring and I was loaned out at various times to the Sacramento, Western, and Rio Grande divisions.

On the Sacramento Division, it meant the last chance to fire steam on legendary Donner Pass—The Hill. Four-unit F7's had already bumped the cab-forwards as road power between Roseville and Sparks, Nev., but the helpers were still nearly all AC's.

Helping on The Hill

The cab-forwards were versatile locomotives, handling passenger, fast freight, and drags with equal ability, but they really came into their own as helpers over the Sierras. Their tremendous power came to the fore slogging upgrade at full throttle, sometimes at 10 mph or less.

The long, slow grind from Roseville up to Norden (only 85 miles) typically took eight or more hours including two water stops. Rear helpers were usually spaced 4 cars ahead of the caboose and another 11 cars ahead of that. Water plugs at Colfax, Gold Run, and Emigrant Gap were spaced so both helpers could take water at the same time. Typically, the rearmost helper was cut off first, then drifted back (with its four cars and caboose attached) to the downhill water plug. Next, the forward helper was cut off (with its cut of cars) and backed up to the upper plug. Those big tenders held 22,000 gallons and took as long as 15 minutes to fill. When both engines had satisfied their thirst, the moves were reversed and the train cou-

Green signals swam out of the coastal fog, visible only when you were right on top of them.

pled up again. As with any helper operation, the rearmost AC began to start the train first, followed by the forward helper, and lastly by the road engine.

Uncoupling and turning the helpers in the Norden snowsheds was a rather complicated maneuver. The rearmost helper was cut off first, backed up to spot the caboose and attached cars, then backed through a crossover onto the covered turntable. Next, the forward helper shoved its cars back against the caboose, backed through the crossover, ran around the caboose, then shoved the rear 15 cars forward to a joint with the rest of the train. It then returned up the siding and backed onto the turntable. After turning, both engines took water, coupled up, and were off to Roseville on the westbound main.

San Francisco-bound freight 401 ascends Altamont Pass thanks to the efforts of 1928-vintage AC-4 No. 4102, one of the early "flat-front" 4-8-2's, on September 9, 1952.

The ride back to town was a piece of cake, especially if you were on the second helper. Nothing to do but set a spot fire, watch the water level, and relax. On one such Friday night trip downhill on the 4227, we stopped to pick up a section gang headed for town for the weekend. Ten or 12 of them crowded into the cab sitting on the deck and sandbox—a little crowded, but glad for the ride.

Keeping sufficient water in the boiler was always the prime consideration in firing a steam locomotive. Vivid photos of boiler explosions posted by the company on the walls of crew rooms were a constant reminder of what could happen if a fireman let the water get too low.

Cab-forwards carried their water just the opposite of a conventional engine. Working uphill, water ran to the smokebox end of the engine—that is, away from the firebox crown sheet. For this reason, the AC's were banned from at least one line—over the Siskiyou Mountains between Ashland, Ore., and Black Butte, Calif.—because the grades were too steep to keep sufficient water over the crown sheet. Going downhill, the opposite was true. Water ran toward the front end and you carried water high in the glass, often nearly full.

Fog along the coast

The trickiest stretch of track on the Coast Division was the Guadalupe Subdivision, between San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. The subdivision had a roller-coaster profile, always climbing or descending. To compound the problem, the line ran close to the ocean and was often blanketed in fog. For a fireman, it was frequently difficult to know exactly where you were and whether you were heading uphill or down.

One of my first trips over this stretch was firing the "Smoky," a peddler freight that picked up and set out all along the line. The engine was the 4293 and we were running as First 916, called for 8 p.m. on a slow job that would take most of the night. Predictably, we encountered thick fog after picking up a string of reefers at Guadalupe. Visibility was cut to a few dozen yards. Green signals swam out of the fog, visible only when you were right on top of them. Soon I had no clue where we were and told the engineer. "That's OK, son," he replied. "I'll help you watch your water and tell you where it should be."

We spent a lot of time in the hole that trip, getting out of the way of a string of first-class westbounds: train 373, the hotshot *Coast Merchandise*; 95, the *Starlight*; and 75, the *Lark*. Sitting in a lonely siding with the headlight turned off, it was black out there beyond the flickering of the firebox on the tracks. All was quiet but for the whistling sounds of the air pumps. Suddenly, the signal ahead turned red, and out of the cottony fog the flashing Mars light of a *Daylight*-type 4-8-4 emerged, gave a couple of toots of his air horn to acknowledge our green signals, and slammed by with a lighted string of cars, then vanished into the fog. For me, that exemplified the romance of railroading.

By the end of 1955 the diesel invasion was in full swing and, except for the San Francisco commutes, most steam had disappeared from the main line. My last trip on a cab-forward was on the 4199 with train 403, from Tracy over Altamont Pass to Bayshore, an unremarkable five-hour trip. Had I known it to be the last, it would have been a sad farewell to a unique experience.



John C. Illman

Cab-forward as classroom



Richard Steinheimer

A handful of student trips at the end of the AC era gave a young man lessons and memories for a lifetime

By Dan Ranger

I started my railroad career on Monday, June 18, 1956, when I signed on to become a locomotive fireman on SP's Western Division in West Oakland, Calif. I had turned 18 on June 13 and graduated from high school on the 16th. These were the two prerequisites to qualify for being hired. I passed the physical, the initial book of rules test, and was put on the student fireman's list.

My first mainline run as a student was the "Vegetables" from Oakland to Roseville, 109 miles. Our engine was AC-7 No. 4172. The fireman was a very good instructor, and I got to fire about

At Port Costa, Calif., along the Carquinez Strait, the fireman of westbound Malley 4213 appears to be exchanging words with his counterpart on Alco S2 switcher 1336. It's June '56—the AC's have just months to live.

half the trip; we had 99 reefers, and the 4172 fired well. On the layover at Roseville, I wandered around the two roundhouses (one pretty much for the cab-aheads, the other for everything else). I recall sitting near the outbound track, watching power getting placed there from the house. There was the smell of Nalco feedwater treatment chemicals,



creosote, fuel oil, sulfur, and steam. For this 18-year-old, it was heaven.

Late in the afternoon, I got called to go back to Oakland on the 4271 with a general freight train of about 60 or 80 cars. The hogger was G. H. "Georgie" New, an "old head" with a 1941 seniority date as an engineer. The trip went pretty well until we stopped for water at Davis. The fireman went back to the tender, leaving me in charge of things. When he returned to the cab he bawled, "Good God, I put it in and he runs it out on the ground!" I had forgotten to close the overflow valve and there was a "lake" under the fireman's side of the cab. From that point on, about every 5 miles George would put his cab light on and check on things, glowering at me.

Things went pretty well until we got to Port Costa for a set out and a fill. We cut off and pulled down in the clear to let the yard goat remove and add cars. Once he was done, we backed up, took water, then recoupled to the train. As we waited for air pressure to come up

in the brake line, George told me, "I want a full glass of water."

"Are you sure?" I hazarded.

"Yes, I'm sure," George bristled.

I thought, *OK, if that's what you want, that's what you'll get, but I don't think this is a good idea.* We were on a super-elevated curve to the right, so I was on the high side. But I did as I was told.

With the train draped around two curves, we took slack, then started forward, with sanders on. About the time the 4271 "got into it," she started working water. It was a sight: Great plumes of steam and water gushed from her stack into the night. We stalled, took slack, started forward, and the same thing happened. George looked at the fireman and me; "Blow her down!" he said. After blowing off the excess water, we tried again. This time the big engine walked the tonnage out of Port Costa.

We got into West Oakland and tied up. A pickup truck came to take us to the crew room. The head brakeman took the front seat and George and I got

in the bed. The time of reckoning was at hand: the signing off on my student fireman's report. George said, "Here, hold the flashlight." He dug the paperwork out of his grip and took out his ballpoint pen. In the part of the form labeled "Remarks," he marked "Good." I almost fell over. After all the problems, I expected a negative comment.

"Mr. New, why 'Good' in the remarks?" I asked.

"Dan, that thing at Davis anyone could have done. At Port Costa, it was my bull. I did not take in account where we were. You did exactly as you were told—can't fault you for that. Overall you did a good job."

If there was anything you could say for Georgie New, he was fair.

Bad one trip, good the next

My next cab-ahead student trip was Oakland-Santa Clara on a 90-car empty reefer train with AC-10 4209 in the early afternoon. Since the route was mostly level, I figured this for a walk in the



Two photos: Ward Kimball

Veteran hogger Bascom Farrow (left, subject of a photo essay in October 1948 *TRAINS*) grips the throttle of AC-11 4246 on train 60, the *West Coast*. Across the cab, fireman Robert Taylor calls a green signal: "Clear!"

park, but 4209 would not cooperate. I could not keep her hot to save my life! Neither the fireman nor I could figure out what the heck was going on. We staggered into the Santa Clara yard, glad to be rid of the poor-steaming beast.

At about midnight I got called for a freight from Santa Clara east to Tracy via Niles Canyon and Altamont Pass. In the crew room I discovered the power was that no-good 4209! "Oh, great," I thought. "She was a pig on the flatland, now I get her on the grades."

We boarded the engine, coupled onto the train, got the air, and left. The hogger—not the same one I had before with the 4209—told the fireman and me the train was "over tonnage" for an AC-10 but that we had a 4-8-4 on the rear to help.

Up to Newark we went, through Centerville to Niles Junction. To my surprise, the 4209 was behaving much better, but now came the test: Niles Canyon and Indian Hill. As we left Niles the hoghead said, "Boys, I hope you're on top of it because that [expletive] on the rear end isn't doing anything. We got it all!"

We made Indian Hill in good shape, with steam pressure just below the pops. We took water at Livermore, then set out for Altamont Pass. Again, no problems. At the crest we stopped and cut off the helper, then rolled down the east side of the pass. Daybreak came as we neared Tracy.

About a week later I was back in Santa Clara. I hunted up the round-house foreman, the same one on duty the night of the 4209 adventure. Wondering how they were able to turn that pig we had out of Oakland into the good puller that got us over Altamont Pass, I asked him what he had done to the 4209. He told me they "serviced it."

"That's all?" I asked.

"Yep."

I explained what had happened from Oakland and then to Tracy. He said, "Son, did you have the same engineer both trips?"

"No."

"What does that tell you?"

There were guys who could run Malleys and guys who could not. Those who tried to run them "by ear" failed. One had to pay attention to the back-pressure gauge and be governed by it. A lesson to be learned.

Sidesaddle Malleys

The AC's were interesting beasts. The fireman rode them "sidesaddle," sitting on the seatbox with his back to the window. You did not watch the fireman's water glass, you watched the engineer's on the other side of the cab. To watch the fireman's glass would have given you a permanent crick in your neck.

These engines were built for mountain service. As such they were counter-balanced for 25–35 mph. When Donner Pass was dieselized, the AC's got bumped to the "flatlands" of the Western, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Coast divisions. There they got to run, sometimes up to 50 or 55 mph. They did not like this, and expressed their displeasure by riding rough. The journal boxes on the lead truck, under the cab, bounced up and down at an alarming rate. The nee-

From that point on, every few miles George would turn his cab light on and check things, glowering at me.

dles on the gauges were a blur.

Most of the Malleys were pretty good stoves. When you got the engine out of the house and on the train, it was a trick to guess when the herder would give you the highball to leave. You never let that happen without having the old girl really hot and ready—if she wasn't, leaving town was pure hell. So you got the water up, with a roaring fire and steam on the rise, hoping you had things right when you got to go. It was a trick. In fact, it was a trick with any engine leaving the initial terminal. An old-head fireman told me on one of my student trips, "Son, you can always look good coming into town. The trick is to look good leaving."

After my student trips, I had no more encounters with the AC's, though I fired many smaller engines in yard and local freight service. In December 1956 I was firing for an old head, Tom Barry, in Port Costa. It was a midnight job and I went out to get our Alco diesel switcher ready. Tom came out and asked, "Dan, did your read the bulletins?"

I sheepishly replied that I had not that night. Tom said, "Here, read this one." It went something like this: "As of December 31, 1956, all AC class locomotives will be withdrawn from service."

Tom said, "Son, that's the end of it. The 4400's and 4300's will be next, and I think by spring steam will be gone forever." He was pretty well right. There were a very few occasions when an odd steam engine was put in service in 1957. But the AC's lay quiet until late November, when the 4274 took a railfan excursion from Sacramento to Sparks and back—the last cab-forward trips ever [Winter 2007 *CLASSIC TRAINS*].

I'll always treasure those student trips on SP's legendary cab-forwards.

More on our Web site

For a roster, specifications, and more on SP's cab-forwards, go to ClassicTrainsMag.com

'My love-hate relationship' with cab-forwards

Triumphs and tribulations on a unique breed of locomotive

By Bob Freese

I hired out in spring 1951 as a fireman on SP's Coast Division. I spent the first month as a student fireman, starting out on switch engines in the Mission Bay and Bayshore yards. The training consisted of three daytime tricks, three evenings, and three midnights, mostly on 0-6-0 switchers at Mission Bay and 2-8-0's at Bayshore.

My first road trip was on the 2:30 a.m. freight to Watsonville Junction with a 4-8-2. After my rest, I caught an evening freight down to San Luis Obispo. From there I made two round trips to Santa Barbara, and another trip back up to Watsonville Junction. My final training trip was on a freight back to San Francisco, where I then took the rules exam and was able to mark up on the extra board. I "made my date" on a midnight switcher at Mission Bay. Most of my jobs were on these boring switch engines, but I did get an occasional mainline job on a 4-8-2 or a 2-10-2 until I was laid off in November. I was called

back without notice in May 1952 for the 2:30 a.m. freight and, to my delight, the engine was No. 4199—my first cab-forward. Thus started my "love-hate" relationship with these unique and sometimes difficult engines.

We left Bayshore with seven cars, bound for San Jose where the rest of our train was waiting for us. The engineer was a newly promoted man, very friendly, and I immediately liked him. We got the highball from the herder and started our run. I had a half glass of water and almost 250 PSI on the steam gauge. But before we reached the main line, the pressure began dropping and the water was also getting low. Thinking that the flues were coated, I asked the hogger if I could sand the flues and he agreed. He dropped the reverse lever in the corner and opened the throttle most of the way, but the pressure and water level continued to drop. So he closed the throttle and came over to my side as we coasted.

He told me to sit in the engineer's seat and blow the horn at the road crossings. He continued to fuss with the fireman's controls, but we kept losing steam pressure and water level. Next he opened the door and windows on the fireman's side, then came over and did the same on the right side. Next he told me he was going to do something to fix the problem and to follow his orders. At his command, I was to open the throttle and drop the reverse lever all the way. As I did this, he *put out* the fire and opened the firebox door. After a few seconds there was a loud *whoosh* from the rear of the locomotive and I looked out the window to see the sky filled with debris and black smoke. Within seconds he re-lit the fire, and in a few minutes

we had a full head of steam and half a glass of water.

The hogger later explained to me that apparently the screen at the end of the boiler was blocked. When we arrived in Watsonville Junction he asked me not to tell anyone what he had done, because it might have damaged some flues. We never heard anything about the flues, but there was a small article in the *Redwood City Tribune* about a lady who had hung out her laundry the night before our trip, and when she got up in the morning she was shocked to see that it was covered with soot and the backyard was also a mess.

Watch that whistle!

Another cab-forward adventure happened with one of my favorite engineers, an old-timer known as "Sanitary Jake." I had fired for him several times, and every trip was a pleasure—except this one. We had deadheaded to San Jose, picked up our engine on the ready track, and coupled to our train. Although we had a newer AC, Jake had to work the engine rather hard to keep us moving at a good pace.

As we were approaching Gilroy, Jake came over and asked me to go back to the tender and check our water level. He'd heard that this engine was very hard on water, and he would stop at Gilroy if he felt we couldn't make it to the next water plug. Now, the later model AC's were equipped with a gauge in the cab, not unlike a gas gauge in a car, that would show the water level in the tender. However, like many auxiliary items on steam engines in the 1950's, it didn't work—in fact, I don't recall ever seeing one that did. So we had to check the water by sight, which meant looking into

**I almost lost my
grip and fell off
the running
board, but somehow I managed
to hang on.**

the tender and hoping to get a reliable estimate of how much water was left.

Doing this on a cab-forward required the fireman to climb out of the cab and onto the running board, make his way down the length of the boiler to the rear deck, climb up the ladder to the top of the tender, open one of the hatches, and check the level—all while the engine was moving. I had never been asked to do this before, but I liked and respected Jake, so I told him I would.

I eased myself out the cab door and started down the boiler. As I neared the end of the boiler, we were approaching a grade crossing. For some reason, instead of using the front air-horn valve as was customary for crossing warnings, Jake accidentally squeezed the valve for the steam whistle—which was about 2 feet from my head. There was a long, loud blast. I almost lost my grip and fell off, but somehow I hung on and was able to complete my task.

Upon my return to the cab, Jake was beside himself with apologies, but I was OK and told him I wasn't mad, just momentarily scared to death. Good man that he was, Jake bought my supper that night.

Fed up on the 4133

One morning, I was on engine 4133, one of the earlier "flat-front" AC's, heading north out of Watsonville Junction. My engineer was an all-business, somewhat unfriendly guy who obviously didn't trust young firemen, so when I worked with him I kept my mouth shut and minded my business. I had no problems—until this trip, when our relationship went downhill in a hurry.

We left Watsonville Junction with 68 cars of rock, a very heavy train. Before we even got out of the yard I started losing pressure and water level. When the hogger saw I was having problems he stopped the train and said nothing, but the look on his face spoke volumes. I worked to get the steam and water up to normal for a few minutes and then we started moving again, only to die within a few carlengths. This happened again before we finally got on the main line, but then I had a chance to sand the flues and hopefully correct the problem. The hogger opened the throttle and dropped the reverse lever down, but it became obvious that sanding was not going to help and we died again.

This went on for almost 25 miles and about 3 hours before the hogger said he was fed up with me and told the head brakeman to line the switch for the middle siding at Gilroy so he could go to beans. But he wasn't the only one fed up. During all of my struggles, he had

not offered one word of help or support, just mumbling under his breath and giving me those nasty looks. I had had it with him and that engine, so I did something I never thought I would do. As we left the engine and headed for the restaurant, I grabbed my grip and walked right past him and directly to Highway 101 and started to hitchhike.

"What are you doing?" he yelled.

"I've had it with you and that engine," I answered. "I quit!"

The conductor came walking up from the caboose and asked the hogger what was going on. He told the hogger that he had come down yesterday with that same engine and that they had had the same problems I was having and that the fireman on that trip was a promoted engineer and that he had strug-

gled the same way I had. When that crew reached Watsonville, they reported the problems to the roundhouse and suggested they inspect and repair the engine before sending it out again. So much for maintenance in the mid-'50's.

The hogger never apologized to me, just told me what the conductor had told him and that ended the conversation. I finished the trip, struggling all the way, and the hogger still never even looked at me. Fortunately, I never had to fire for him again. ■



Two photos: Benny A. Romano



Approaching Pimienta (above), ex-Nickel Plate 2-8-2 2211 and NdeM original GR-34 class 2-8-0 1414, with 58-inch driving wheels, work hard up a 1.5 percent grade.

Helper engine 2210 shows off its custom-painted "face" at Victor Rosales, awaiting a southbound train it will help to Zacatecas. Locomotives and crews were usually assigned together, and crews would decorate their charges, often with stars, flags, and cast eagles, or combinations thereof.

In a prelude to the top photo, helper 2211 (far right) prepares to back up at Victor Rosales and couple onto 2-8-0 1414, coming up the main line with the southbound freight.





One day at . . . Zacatecas, Mexico

By Stan Kistler • Photos by the author



In January and February 1960, I had spent almost five weeks photographing Mexican steam with friends Harold Stewart and Phil Kauke. Traveling by car from our homes in Pasadena, Calif., we had covered about 7,000 miles down to Mexico City, Puebla, and Veracruz in central Mexico, and back. The items we saw and photographed made us realize we'd have to go back to cover what we'd missed, or had been able to see only briefly.

Thus in that following autumn, I once again found myself in Mexico in search of *la locomotora de vapor*, the steam locomotives of the Mexican National Railways (NdeM, Nacionales de Mexico), which still were abundant on almost all lines in the central and southern portions of the country. My first big goal was the city of Zacatecas in central Mexico, summit of a grade in each direction on the Mexico City-Ciudad

Juarez main line. I spent the entire day of Wednesday, October 26, 1960, there, photographing trains.

This trip began on October 22; I was in the company of fellow railfan and Santa Fe railroader Warren Sattley. We loaded my 1959 Ford F-150 truck with food, water, spare tires, film, and several still and movie cameras, plus a tape recorder. We had planned on three weeks, taking our time to visit spots I had missed on the previous trip, and which Warren had never seen, or spending more time where the steam railroading was especially good.

We left Pasadena in the early morning and made it to Willcox, Ariz., east of Tucson, for our first overnight stop. The following day we crossed the border from El Paso into Ciudad Juarez, and that evening we were settled in our motel in the city of Chihuahua, capital city of its namesake Mexican state 230



Still on the 1.5 percent grade, the 2211 and 1414 are working hard near El Bote. GR-34 class 1414 was one of 55 Cooke 2-8-0's of 1902-03.



At El Grillo, the 2211 and 1414 are only about a mile and a half from the summit. Freights typically ran only about 2,000 tons on this grade.



miles south of El Paso/Juarez.

The next morning we were out shooting the Ferrocarril Mineral de Chihuahua, a 14-mile, 3-foot-gauge line that employed little oil-burning 2-8-0's, hauling lead and zinc ore between an aerial tramway at Santa Eulalia and a smelter at Avalos, outside Chihuahua. We got some great shots of this little line, which still used link-and-pin couplers and whose brakemen rode the cars, setting brakes on the downgrade on the loaded trains.

We left Chihuahua that afternoon, and that evening we were in Parral, a reasonable distance—about 250 miles—north of Zacatecas, our planned destination the following day.

The city of Zacatecas is the capital of the state of the same name and is at an elevation of 8,075 feet. Its importance to me, from a railroad standpoint, was that it was the summit of an NdeM helper district in both directions, north and south. Doubleheaded steam on a mountain grade seemed appealing, reminding me of my great times in earlier years on the Tehachapi grade and the Cajon Pass in California.

This line through Zacatecas, completed in 1884 as the Mexican Central, led northwest out of Mexico City to Juarez via Queretaro, Irapuato, Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, Torreon, and Chihuahua. In fall 1960 it hosted two daily passenger trains and about six freights

Consolidation helper 1582 and road engine 2-8-2 2209 approach Zacatecas from the south (above). Soon, the helper cuts off (right) and heads for Victor Rosales, as the Mike waits for its turn to follow downhill.

in each direction. The passenger trains were diesel-hauled, but the freights were 100 percent steam south of Felipe Pescador, a division point about 70 miles north of Zacatecas. Moreover, the locomotives were predominantly 2-8-0 and 2-8-2 types from two U.S. roads, the Chicago & North Western and the Nickel Plate.

NdeM's GR-43 class 2-8-0's were formerly of C&NW's Z, or "Zulu," class, with various road numbers between 1458 and 1898. Built around 1910 by Baldwin and American, they were declared surplus by C&NW in 1942-43. A total of 37 went to NdeM and were put in series 1550-1586. They had 61-inch drivers and carried 185 pounds boiler pressure.

The former Nickel Plate 2-8-2's, 25 in number, became class KR-3 after purchase by NdeM in 1945-46 and were put into series 2200-2224. They had 63-inch drivers and carried 200 pounds boiler pressure. On the NKP, they had been class H-6; Baldwin and Lima had built them, and some were of the USRA standardized design of 1918. I should note that Nacionales de Mexico's 1946-built QR-1 class 4-8-4's, which attracted



many American visitors, were rarely seen on this line, being kept mainly on the routes from Valle de Mexico (Mexico City) to Escobedo and Irapuato, only occasionally straying north as far as Aguascalientes for shop work.

NdeM's Central Division (Aguascalientes Subdivision, Zacatecas District) spanned 140 miles south from Felipe Pescador to the city of Aguascalientes, where the system's major steam locomotive shops were located. Southward from Felipe Pescador, the line climbed on a gentle 0.5-percent grade to Victor Rosales, where a steady climb of 1.5 percent began for 18.6 miles to reach the summit at Zacatecas. Likewise, northbound trains started out of Aguascalientes on a light 0.5-percent grade until reaching Barriozabal, where the



28.5-mile, 1.5-percent climb to Zacatecas commenced toward the summit.

Leaving either Felipe Pescador or Aguascalientes, the ex-C&NW 2-8-0's and ex-NKP 2-8-2's could handle trains of 2,000-2,100 tons toward Zacatecas, but at the foot of the 1.5-percent portions in either direction, this tonnage rating was reduced by more than half to reach the summit. Thus, helpers of either class were stationed at Victor Rosales on the north and at Barrioabail on the south. At Zacatecas, helpers would cut off and run light in either direction to where they'd be needed next.

Our all-day effort on October 26 was rewarded with doubleheaders of various combinations of the 2-8-0's and 2-8-2's, as both road engines and helpers. The big surprise was on a southbound in the early afternoon, whose road engine, 2003, was an ancient Baldwin 2-6-6-2 Mallet, built in 1911! Slogging upgrade with 2-8-0 1552 as its helper, the 2003 made an imposing sight (and sound). I later learned it had been running out its miles (flue time) in captive service between Felipe Pescador and Aguascalientes, where its frequent ailments could be expertly tended to.

This afternoon at Zacatecas got our three-week trip off to a fine start. The following day we moved on south toward Mexico City, looking forward to the steam locomotives we would encounter, both standard and narrow gauge. We were not to be disappointed. Mexico in 1960 was an exciting adventure for us steam-locomotive fans who managed to get there. ■

The serendipity of the day occurred in the afternoon, an encounter with ancient 2-6-6-2 Mallet 2003 as road engine on a southbound, being helped by 2-8-0 1552. After rounding a curve (top and middle), the doubleheader neared the summit at Zacatecas (above).

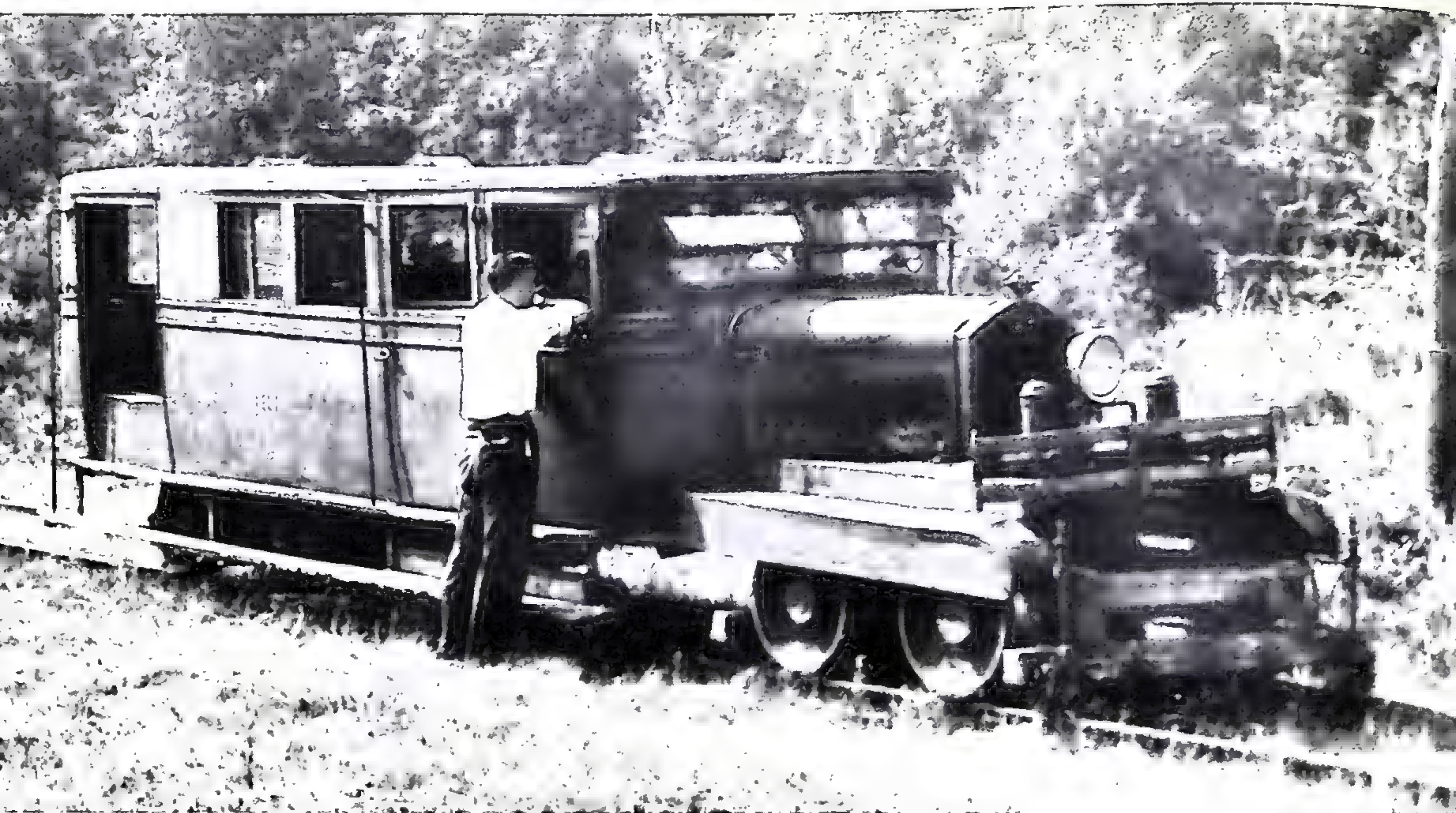




At Zacatecas, a possible budding railfan watches from the gangway (top left) as the friendly NdeM fireman supplies hot water to local women. Extra 1571 North (above and left) is waiting in the siding across from the depot for the arrival of the southbound with 2-8-0 1552 helping 1911-built 2-6-6-2 2003.

Note the brakeman riding atop the fifth car, the first boxcar, as Extra 2206 North drifts downgrade between Zacatecas and El Grillo. The engine is another former NKP Mikado.





Jim Shaughnessy

Uncle Con chats with "Jumping Goose" driver Rob Mills at the Highway 3 grade crossing.

The Jumping Goose

Regarding a chance encounter in the woods with the Grasse River Railroad

By Jim Shaughnessy



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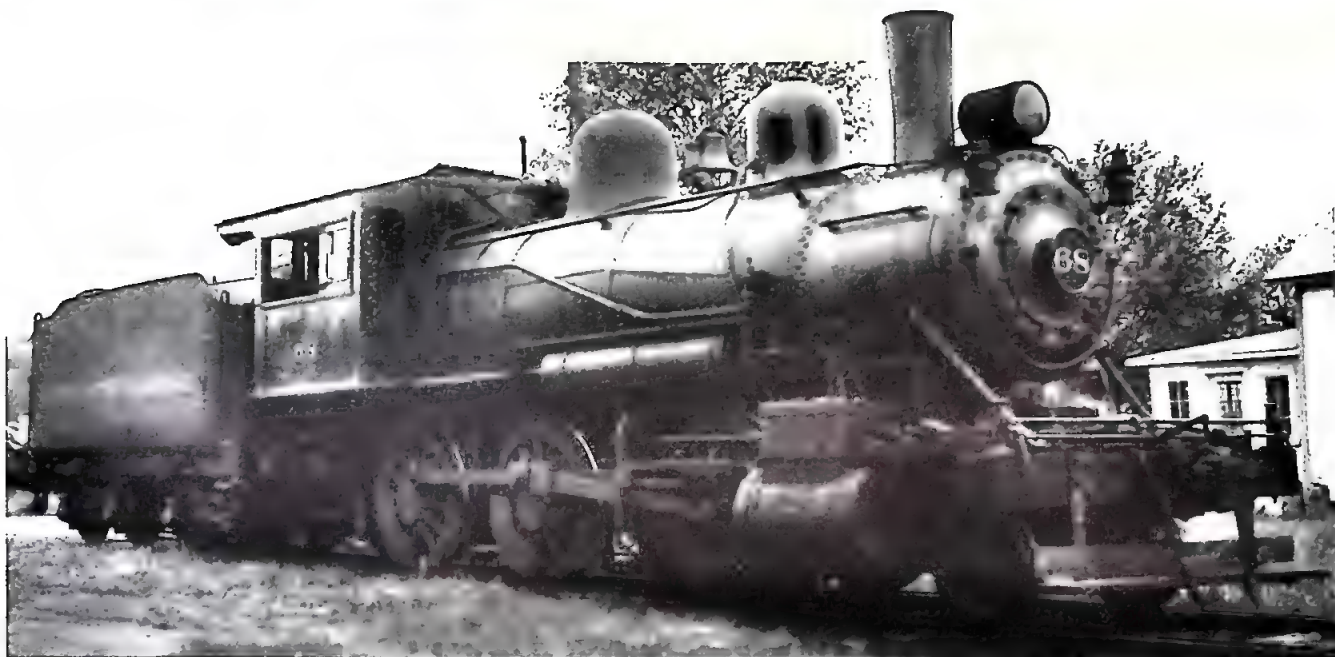
Many regions in the world boast of their legendary and elusive creatures, such as "Big Foot," "The Abominable Snowman," and "Nessie" (in Scotland's Loch Ness), to name three. The Adirondack Mountains in Upstate New York had a railborne creature that might well have been similarly categorized, called "the Jumping Goose."

I had a personal encounter with this creature one day in July 1948, in the central Adirondacks. My Uncle Con (C. A. Shaughnessy), an insurance company engineer, and I, at the time a high-school student, were returning from an inspection he had made at the

Benson Iron Mines near Star Lake. We were driving east toward Tupper Lake on a lonely stretch of Highway 3 east of Cranberry Lake when, as we approached a weed-grown railroad crossing near Brandy Brook, a low-slung, green object appeared from out of the woods.

What on earth could this be way up here in the middle of nowhere? Might it be the infamous Jumping Goose? Indeed it was.

Uncle Con previously had made the acquaintance of the "driver," Rob Mills, and they passed some pleasantries at the crossing while I made the accompanying photo of the creature (above).



R. W. Biermann; CLASSIC TRAINS collection

In reality, this unusual rail vehicle, property of the Grasse River Railroad, was crafted from a 1931 White Motor Co. bus by Roy Sykes, the railroad's inventive superintendent and son of the line's president.

The "Jumping Goose," as it was called locally, saved the Grasse River the expense of operating a locomotive and a passenger car on its 17-mile run from Cranberry Lake through Conifer to Childwold station, its connection to railroading's outside world. (Childwold was on New York Central's Adirondack Division line to Lake Placid, 7 miles south of Tupper Lake Junction and about 100 miles north of Utica.) Interestingly, to apply the brakes on the Jumping Goose, you turned the steering wheel.

The Grasse River Railroad itself was the outgrowth of the Emporium Forestry Companies' (EFC) logging operation in the central Adirondacks. In 1915, the New York State Public Service Commission determined that the railroad operation between Childwold and the Cranberry Lake mill complex was moving passengers and interstate freight, as well as local company wood products, and so had to be defined as a common-carrier railroad.

The busy mill in Cranberry Lake closed in April 1927, and the logging railroad operations, which had expanded to about 80 track-miles in the woods, ended in 1937. A second mill in Conifer was sold to the Heywood-Wakefield Corp. in 1945, and the rails from Conifer to Cranberry Lake were removed three years later.

The Grasse River, in its prime, operated four steam locomotives, while the

Mogul No. 68 of the Grasse River poses at Cranberry Lake, N.Y., for a visitor from San Francisco, Calif., on June 26, 1936. The obscure pike would last for only about another decade.



Mike Runey; CLASSIC TRAINS collection

Lettered for parent Emporium Forestry Companies, the Shay used on the Grasse River Railroad noses a couple of carloads of lumber onto the NYC siding at Childwold in the late 1940's.

separate, widespread logging operations in the woods used an EFC-owned Shay plus other geared type engines. Over the years, as passenger and mail traffic dwindled, a series of self-propelled, gasoline-powered cars were created as a money-saving way to carry what business remained. The most-renowned and last-used vehicle was No. 11, the Jumping Goose. For a number of years, twice a day it would make the lonely trip to Childwold station from Cranberry Lake to meet NYC's Adirondack Division trains. After the

Grasse River operations ended in the late 1940's, the Goose eventually went, in 1953, to the Rail City Museum at Sandy Creek, north of Oswego, now defunct. Unfortunately, the Goose was scrapped there in summer 1968.

I attribute at least some of my railroad interest to that of Uncle Con, illustrated by incidents like this encounter of ours with the Jumping Goose. Running across this and other early 35mm black-and-white negatives of mine brought back memories of several such adventures. ■

Fort Worth & Denver days



Coming of age in the 1950's, with branchline steam in Abilene on the Texas plains

By Gary M. Bonine • Photos by the author

Nard Lewis and I grew up in Abilene, Texas, meeting at age 13 during the 1953–54 school year. As with most close friendships, ours was one of those blessings in life where individuals with like interests cross paths and connect. We certainly did. Most of my memories of events that long ago have been fading into the mists of time, but some remain sharp, not unlike the experience of riding a passenger train through a heavy fog, catching glimpses of scenery through breaks in the mists.

Abilene, a city of 46,000 in 1950 whose population would almost double before my high-school graduation, was founded in 1881 as a cattle-shipping point on the Texas & Pacific Railway and named after the Kansas town on the Chisholm Trail. Located 160 miles west of Fort Worth on T&P's main line to El Paso, Abilene in 1954 was served

by two passenger trains in each direction, the *Texas Eagle* in daytime and the *Westerner* in the post-midnight hours. Abilene & Southern, a T&P-owned short line, ran south 54 miles to Ballinger.

But Nard's and my memories concern Abilene's other railroad, the Fort Worth & Denver, the Burlington Route subsidiary whose branch stretched 151 miles south from Wichita Falls to Abilene. Stamford, 38 miles north of Abilene, was the home terminal for branch crews as well as the diverging point for another branch that wandered 82 miles west to Spur. The run to Spur was made only once a week, on Sunday.

After Nard and I graduated from high school and left Abilene, we seldom talked about our Fort Worth & Denver adventures, so these tales are just memory fragments. I do remember when it all started, though.

In the summer of '53, my mother had

enrolled me in an art class, held in downtown Abilene on an upper floor of the old Post Office building. It had no air-conditioning, so all the windows were open. About 10 o'clock one morning on a calm, hot July day, I was working with pastels when I heard a steam locomotive whistle blowing for a grade crossing. I froze in mid-stroke—the last such whistle I had heard was from the T&P, now all-diesel here, in 1951.

Is that a STEAM whistle? I thought. Then I heard it again. I quickly put up my materials, much to the wonderment of my teacher, and told her as I ran to the door, "I'll be back tomorrow."

I ran—and I mean *ran*—toward the source, my heart leaping with joy as I found a live, honest-to-God steam locomotive. Still at a run, I followed it down North 4th Street, to the wye, and all the way to the south side of town. The engine went toward the depot, dropped



It does snow in Abilene, Texas, occasionally, evidenced as FW&D Mike 405, not one of the three branch-line regulars, switches on the town's south side on December 26, 1955.

off the conductor, and returned to the water tank to top off prior to leaving town. The crew, having seen that I was like a magnetized particle following them, allowed me to ride the tender footboard with them back to the wye.

I found them and their treasure only one more time that summer. We lived a good distance from downtown, so my contact with the FW&D was coincidental to my being there, which was not very often. The second time I caught them, they were pulling away from the water tank. This time, I did not follow them to the wye, and when I turned to leave, I noticed a dark-haired boy about my age halfway between the depot and the water tank. Like me, he left upon seeing the engine depart. Several weeks later, early in the fall school term, when Nard and I "found each other" and became close friends, I realized it was he whom I had seen that day.

"Adopted" by the crew

One day while riding our bicycles, Nard and I wandered over to the FW&D water tank and made a startling discovery—it was overflowing. This told us a steam locomotive was still in use here, so we started searching for the train in earnest. Within a week or two we found the engine at the tank, having just arrived from Stamford, and to our delight, we were invited into the cab to ride with the crew while they switched Abilene.

And so it was that we met Robert G. Ladd, the engineer, and Rufus Little, the regular fireman. To us they were always "Mr. Ladd" and "Mr. Little." When they were off, the primary extra enginemen were Bill Logan and Tommy Ryan. There were others, although I no longer recall their names.

Nard and I discovered from Mr. Ladd and Mr. Little why our encounters had been so infrequent—their arrival after dawn was not the norm. Their usual arrival time was around 2 a.m. Once we learned this, Nard and I would set our alarms to get up about 1 a.m. and ride our bikes to the water tank and wait. I lived about five miles from the tank and Nard about four; I would bike to his house and we would continue together. During the school year, we went on Saturday mornings and holidays, but during the following summer, we rode around with them twice or sometimes three times a week.

At some point during that summer of '54 the crew invited us to go to Stamford with them, but circumstances were such that Nard and I were seldom able to go together. The locomotives we rode were FW&D's 401–410 series Mikados, plus Consolidations 202 and 205, which were kept at Stamford on an alternating basis to cover the Sunday run to Spur.

FW&D in Abilene had some local trackage typical of Great Plains cities of its size in the 1950's. I recall when riding one night on the north side, while switching an alley track, we were between two buildings. The clearance was so tight that the fire would start "drumming." I thought the building's windows on the fireman's side were going to break—the whole window unit was fluctuating back and forth with the pressures created by the drumming fire.

There was a cottonseed/feed mill in the north alley track between Ash and Plum streets. The curve northward from the main in North 4th Street was so sharp that the 400's had to face east and back in. When negotiating this curve, the cab corner on the fireman's side would catch the upper edge of the tender and come loose with a sharp *snap*—definitely not a place for the fin-

gers. Also, during this move, so great were the lateral forces that the inside wheel of the pilot truck would rise off the rail three or four inches. Mr. Ladd told us they had to go in this way with the 400's because they tended to derail when coming back out if the engine was facing west. The smaller 200's could go in facing either direction.

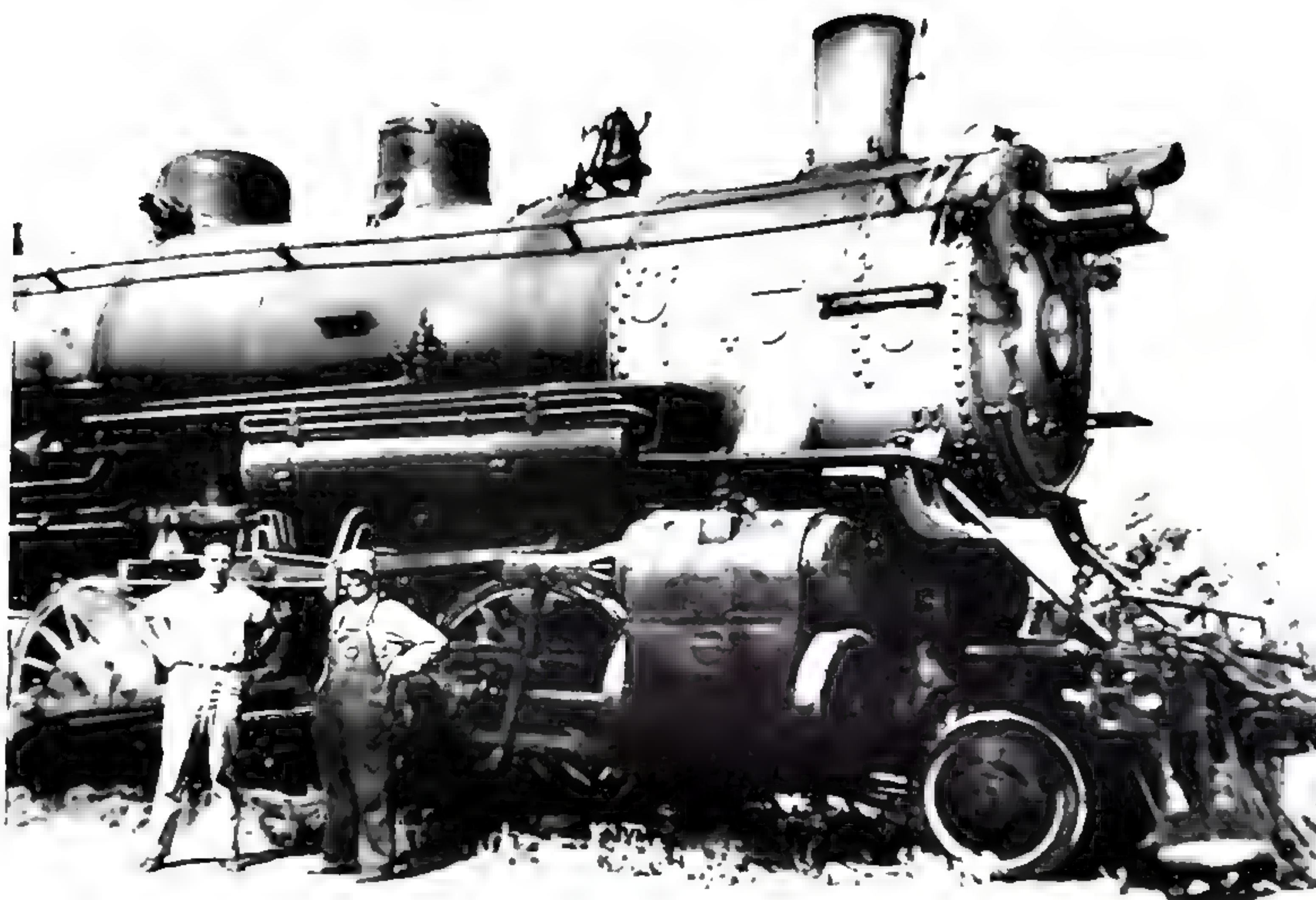
The crews often used the tail track (which, continuing west, became the switching main in North 4th Street) and adjoining legs of the wye to line up parts of the train and their spots for the north side. All tracks in North 4th opened to the east except for the one to the cottonseed mill. The grade from Treadaway Boulevard east down to the wye switch was quite steep.

One night we were lining up the train and spotting cars. The tonnage was considerable and the engine had to work really hard. During one move, after the engineer opened the throttle way out, a bright-yellow piece of firebrick about the size of a golf ball shot out of the stack with the heavy exhaust. All movement immediately stopped—all eyes were now on the miniature, man-made meteor descending to earth. It came down, hitting the tin roof of a house about 25 yards away. After the loud *whack*, we watched as it clattered to the ground, thankfully, in front of the house. We all waited until the lump stopped glowing and everyone was certain that a fire had not been started, nor would be. Upon its expiration, our stack-thundering switching resumed.

Normally the crew would take time to eat while on the north side, usually after they finished switching up there. They would leave the engine at the end



Fireman Little (left) and engineer Ladd pose going off duty at Stamford in August 1958.



Bill Logan and Robert Ladd pose in Abilene in summer 1954 with 2-8-2 407, one of three FW&D Mikados (also the 408 and 410), Baldwin-built in 1915, regularly used on the branch.

of track at North 4th and Walnut streets, seven blocks west of the wye. There was a 24-hour café just south on Walnut, and it was here that Nard and I indirectly met "Platterhead."

It was around 4 a.m., and all of us had gone to the café. Nard and I were sitting between Mr. Ladd and Mr. Little. We were at the counter, the train crew having chosen a booth. Mr. Ladd leaned over toward us with a mirthful look, and in a low voice said, "You see that brakeman over there?" "Yes," we said. "We call him Platterhead." Mr. Little started chuckling quietly, but it was all Nard and I could do to keep from exploding with laughter at the silly name. We were squeaking and huffing to keep from laughing out loud, which made it all the worse. Mr. Ladd explained that a number of years earlier, the brakeman

had been pestering a waitress. He'd ordered a huge breakfast, which was served on a heavy, oval ceramic platter. When the waitress brought his order out, she broke the platter on top of his head, covering him with eggs, meat, and potatoes. Railroaders, being the merciless lot they are, immediately christened him Platterhead!

On the south side, there was not as much switching to do. One location was an oil company that received boxcars of canned motor oil, among other products. The track at the loading dock was always coated with oil and grease. If any switching had to be done beyond here, the engine was almost guaranteed to slip. Unless momentum had been built up, it took sand to make the lightest of moves, even without any cars.

South-side chores also included in-

terchange with the T&P. The grade up the transfer track was steep, and when shoving heavy tonnage, the FW&D engines really sounded neat. Nard once spent some time beneath, and at the top of, the U.S. Highway 80 overpass just so he could hear the heavy exhausts booming off the bottom of the bridge.

Now and then, the crew would go eat on the south side; the Green Frog Café was about a block and a half from the water tank. They would spot the engine at the tank and kill the fire, a common practice with oil-burners. Once, after they'd spotted one of the 200's there, we were nearing the café when the bell started ringing! Mr. Ladd and Mr. Little briefly discussed the matter and concluded the engine was just being her obstinate self. We continued on.

Another time, upon returning from breakfast on the south side, Mr. Ladd had trouble relighting the fire. You could hear the crackling and spitting, but it wouldn't ignite. He was standing to one side working the blower, atomizer, and oil. I was on the apron at the left inside cab edge, peering past his head and shoulders. The fire finally ignited with a heavy, yet soft *WHOOMPH*. The flame shot straight out the fire door to the sandbox and up the front of the tender, ending at the top edge of the oil bunker. There was no yellow color to it, just a dull orange, tending toward red.

Tales of the Shinnery

I remember little of my rides to Stamford. There were two oil refineries north of Abilene; the bigger one was closer to town and usually required switching every other trip. One night, the rear brakeman wanted to continue the trip to Stamford in the cab, so Mr. Ladd suggested to me, "Go up on the tank; it will be a good place to ride." I took a big handful of waste and went back, sitting on the tender headlight with my feet on the back edge of the oil bunker. The breeze was a little cool, so to get out of the wind, I stretched out on my back behind the oil bunker, using the waste for a pillow. I didn't last long. The warmth of the bunker, listening to the stack talk and whistle, and watching the stars through wisps of steam put me sound asleep. I woke up just before we arrived in Stamford.

The region around Abilene has areas of sand here and there, heavily populated with broad-leaf oaks. Sprinkled among them is the little shin oak, which at maturity is no more than shin high. This type of area was called a "Shinnery," and the branch went through one between Abilene and Anson.

I will never forget one morning ride



H. K. Vollrath collection

Consolidation 205, a 1903 Rhode Island product, gave the author quite a ride one night.

on engine 205 with Mr. Ladd and a new fireman. I rode along during the switching, and all the while the fireman had his hands full with a cantankerous, primitive Monitor injector and a sometimes sticking check valve, made to work by a combination of verbal encouragement and taps with a hammer. Upon finishing the switching, Mr. Ladd asked if I could go to Stamford with them.

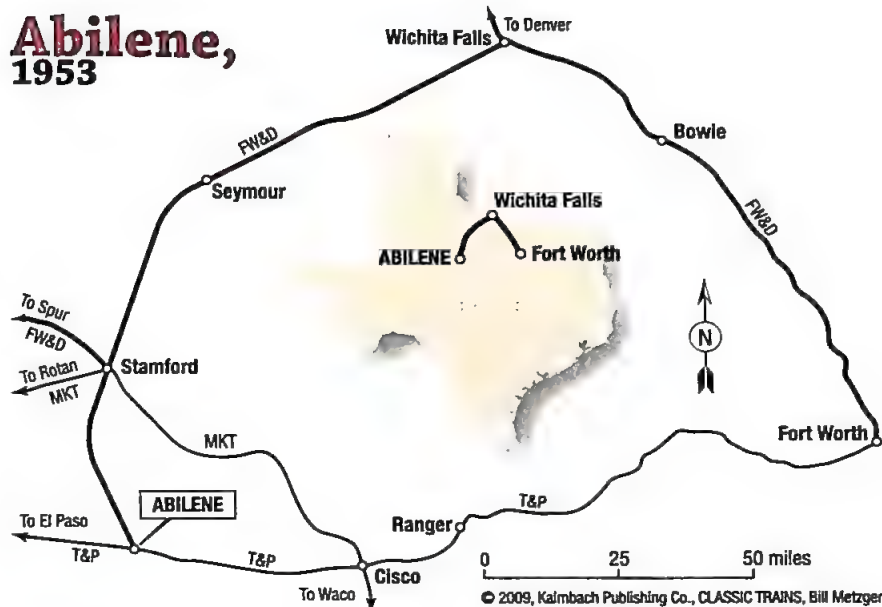
Immediately north of the wye, the line climbed a good grade, but we had no difficulty as the tonnage was not enough to tax the 205. Once we cleared the first oil refinery, Mr. Ladd opened her up. Nard and I never knew what the allowed track speed was, but the usual pace was about 30 or 40 mph. This day, Mr. Ladd was taking the 205 up to 50 or more. As her speed increased, she began changing, revealing a Jekyll and Hyde personality by the mile—going from a docile switcher to an animal wilder than any rodeo bucking stock!

I was standing in the middle of the cab just off the apron, facing the backhead. As the ride became wilder, it soon became evident that I could not keep standing there—even while holding on, I was being lifted off my feet. I moved back to ride the sandbox on the tender and nearly was knocked out of the engine in the process. Thankfully the oil bunker had steps to the top, and I grabbed one before being launched to the ground. Once safely seated I could watch the performance in front of me.

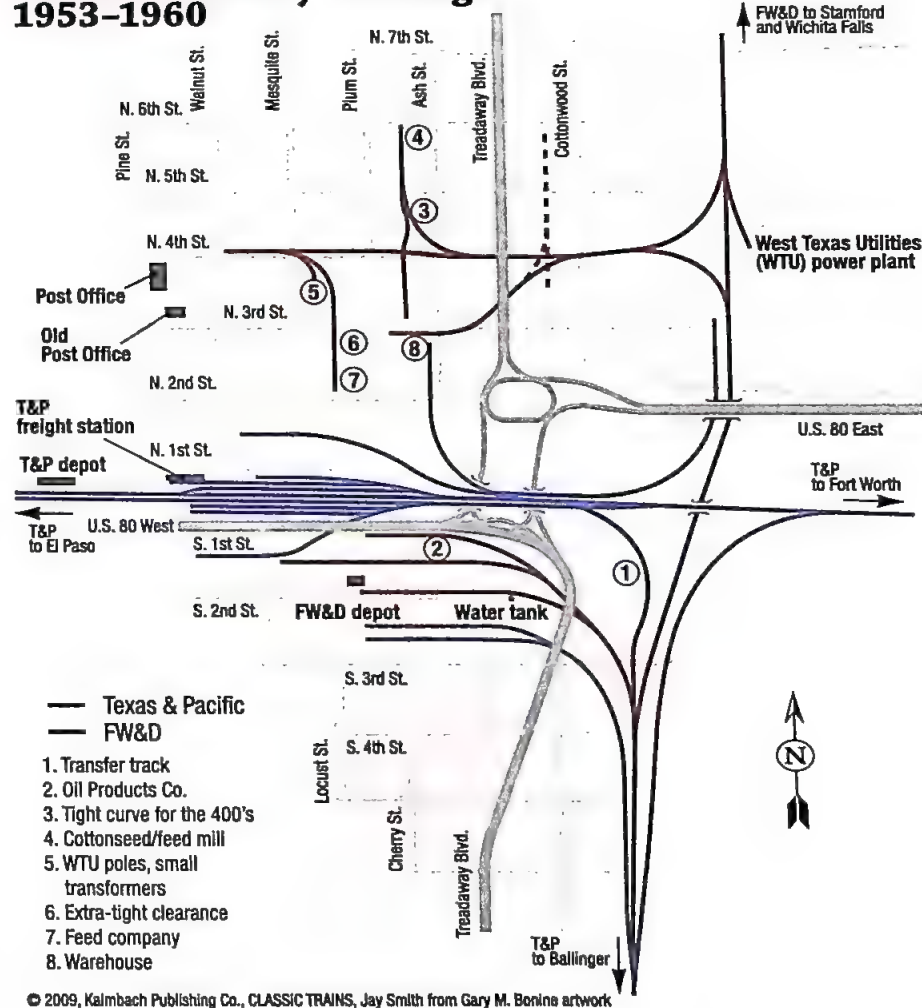
The 205 was slamming from side to side, crashing in vertical bounces. Interspersed were brief moments of smoothness. It was as though she was trying to shake off the cab or eject its occupants. The din was awesome, especially the clanging of the apron, which spent more time in the air than resting on the tender. I saw more of the rail and ties than I did the top of the apron!

Once we passed the second refinery and entered the Shinnery, Mr. Ladd also gave up. He set the throttle and Johnson bar the way he wanted and stepped back to the tender, positioning himself with one foot on the gangway, the other on the first step and a hand on each grab iron. There was only one major road crossing in the Shinnery, and he stepped back into the cab just long enough to blow the whistle for it. All the while, the hapless fireman was alternately trying to cling to the armrest or sort of float on the seat and grab the needed valves as they whirled and swept by him. Under the circumstances, adjusting the firing valve took real artistry. Thankfully, with the engine set, he did not have to adjust it much. The injector and check valve, though, worked flaw-

Abilene, 1953



Abilene Central Industry Trackage 1953-1960



lessly through all this. Once we entered Hawley, near the end of the Shinnery, Mr. Ladd returned to the cab.

Only a day or two after that ride—which in retrospect may have been fast

because the crew was getting tight on hours of service—Nard and I ventured down around midnight to wait for the train's arrival. It came in about 1 a.m., behind a 400. We stepped up into the



From the U.S. 80 overpass: Fresh day-after-Christmas snow adorns 405 (left) in 1955. In May 2004 (above), pecan trees filled the wye, but UP still served north-side customers.

cab, and shortly Mr. Ladd said, "They may fire me." "Why?" we asked. "I stole this engine," he said. "Stole the engine?" He explained that the 205 had again been assigned to the Abilene run, while this 400 was to go on a stock train.

"All they were going to do is go to Haskell, load cattle, and return to Stamford," he said. "I am not bringing another 200 down here unless there is some kind of a real emergency," meaning an engine failure. I do not recall seeing a 200 in Abilene after that.

Stamford, of course, was the end of our rides. For the most part, small towns in that era were doing well, and Stamford was no exception. It was a neat little community with highways diverging in several directions, located at the crossing of the FW&D and the Katy's 269-mile branch from Waco northwest to Rotan. Stamford was 226 miles from Waco and appeared to have crew layover facilities. Occasionally, we would see Katy's red diesels idling near the buildings, but being enamored of steam, Nard and I never ventured over to look. Katy had two or three tracks adjacent to the main track at their servicing and yard office area, while the FW&D had a roundhouse, an engine-servicing track, and a small yard.

FW&D's Stamford roundhouse foreman/engine watchman/take-care-of-everything guy was Claude Lyons. The roundhouse had been sold to a grain firm, so his work was done from a couple of buildings next to the one-track engine lead. The overalls Mr. Lyons

wore when servicing the engines made for a humorous sight—old and saturated with pin grease, they would stand by themselves on cold winter days.

Half a century after the fact, I cannot remember how I got home from my rides to Stamford. I remember sleeping on the couch at the Ladd's home, but not going to work with Mr. Ladd and the crew for a southbound run. I'm reasonably certain that all my trips were one-way. I vaguely remember walking away from a Burlington Coaches bus in Abilene, so I guess I'd ride the train to Stamford and return on the bus, though I know Nard, now and then, was able to make the full round trip on the train.

Growing up, separating

In summer 1955 I began working for my father, a building contractor, and from May '56 to May '58, I was in my high school's Diversified Occupations program, going to school in the mornings and working for an architectural firm in the afternoons (all day in summer) to save money for college. Meanwhile, Nard started working for his father, who had three bulldozers and built tanks and terraces, and pushed mesquite and prickly pear for ranchers and farmers. Our schedules rarely enabled us to ride to Stamford together.

Sometime in late 1955 or early '56, Nard and I began driving, which—when we were able to get together—made our waits in Abilene a lot easier and greatly extended our search abilities when trying to locate the train. I had a '41 Olds and Nard an early-'50's Chevy.

As we began to have less time to devote to the FW&D, steam was likewise approaching its end. Sometime during 1956, engine 410 disappeared, and Nard and I figured we'd never see her again, but fortunately we were together when she did return. On a night in late 1956 or early '57, we'd driven to the water tank to check for signs that an engine had been there. Finding none, we drove north on the roads nearest the tracks, and on the north side of town

we saw a headlight and heard a whistle. We immediately turned into the nearest street that led to the tracks.

The sight was beautiful! Here she came, shining and glossy in the streetlights, becoming radiant as she approached our car headlights. It was the 410, and when she passed, it was as though she was on a well-lit stage, so bright was her new paint. The rectangular "Burlington Route" emblem on the tender looked as though it was done in gold leaf and red enamel, plus the gloss black. She was magnificent! Nard and I gasped, for we had never before seen a locomotive fresh from the shops. Her image is still etched in my mind.

Nard's father's work took him farther and farther west, so after our graduation in 1958, the Lewises moved to Sweetwater, 40 miles away. Shortly afterward, Nard discovered Santa Fe's secondary-line doodlebugs, and he and I made one round trip from Sweetwater to Altus, Okla., and back. We had an ice chest full of fried chicken, sandwiches, snacks, and sodas—but no cameras! In the 1960's we did ride a few of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club's three-day trips on the Rio Grande narrow-gauge.

To my recall, 1957 was the last year for FW&D steam into Abilene; I found a small note in my photo album, perhaps indicating the last run: "February 1957." Nard and I had fervently hoped steam would last until we graduated from high school, but it was not to be. F. Hol Wagner Jr.'s book, *The Colorado Road*, relates that 202, 205, and most of the 401–410 series were written off in 1960.

Nard and I had a standing invitation to go to Spur on the Sunday run with Mr. Ladd and/or Mr. Little, but neither of us was able to get the time to do it, something we both regretted. After graduating from high school, Nard and I made two more FW&D trips together. One was in August 1958 prior to going off to college, and the other was in summer 1960. When we'd return to Abilene during our college years, we never had the time to pursue the FW&D. Upon



Nard Lewis poses by Colorado & Southern SD7 812 on his and the author's second-to-last Fort Worth & Denver ride, in August 1958.

graduating from our respective schools, Nard and I took different paths. He went to work at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, and I hired out with Southern Pacific in Sanderson, Texas, to "try railroading for a while." It became a career.

Sadly, Nard passed away suddenly in December 1979, probably the end result of a serious battle he'd had as a youth with rheumatic fever a year or two prior to our meeting in 1953.

Mr. Ladd retired on January 26, 1961. I know this only because my mother mailed me the article from the *Abilene Reporter News* about his retirement.

My memories of the Fort Worth & Denver, Mr. Ladd, Mr. Little, Bill Logan, and Tommy Ryan rest in my heart. Nard and I had some memorable times because of the kindness and friendliness of these gentlemen. They were railroaders in an extraordinary era; it was only because of them that we were able to participate in it. ■



H. K. Vollrath collection

Probably one of the last engines to go through FW&D's Childress (Texas) shop, Mikado 410 showed up all glossy and shiny one night in Abilene, giving the two train-hunters a thrill.



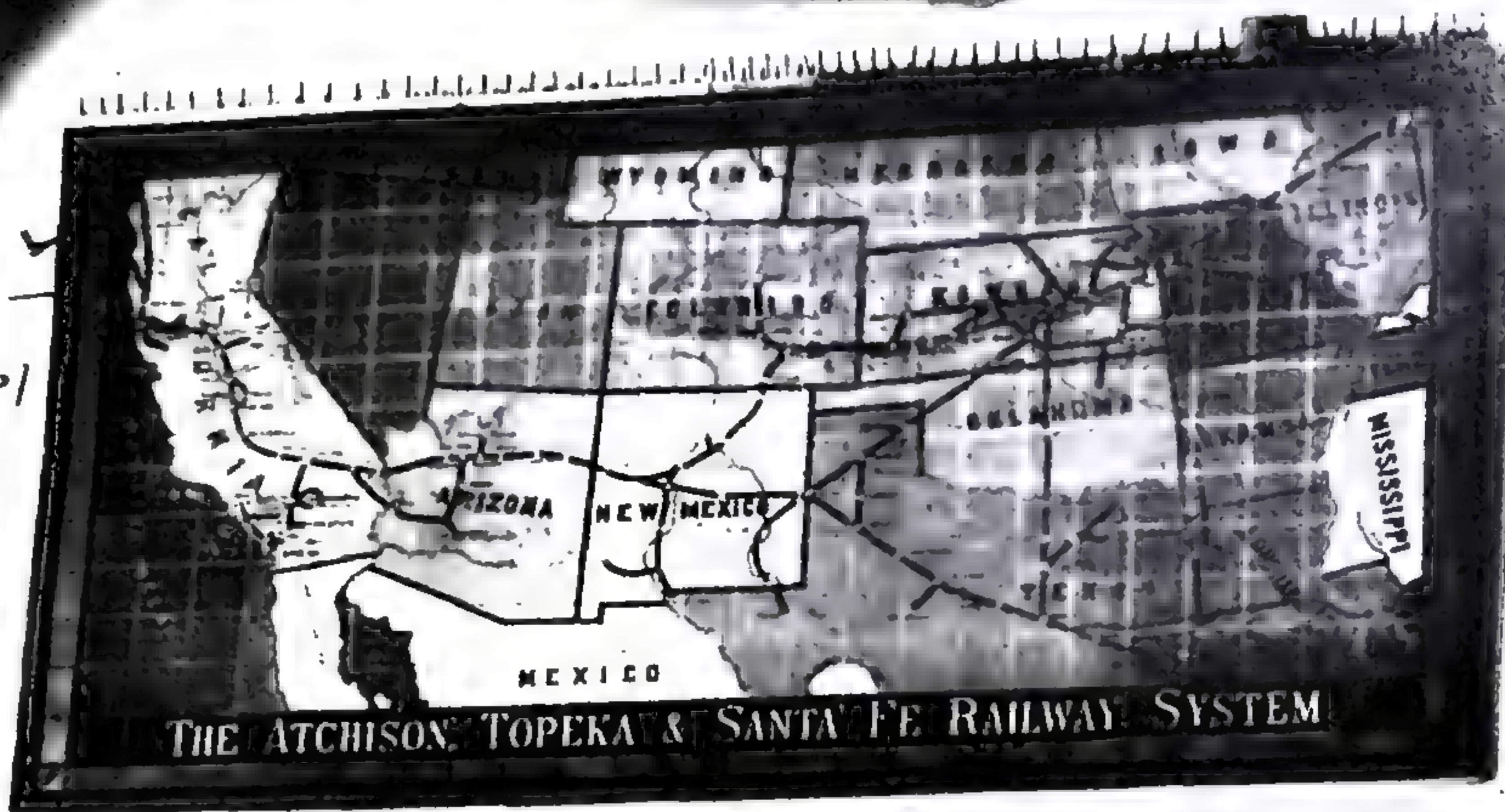
Dust to dust: The Shinnery as it is now, looking upgrate. Will the oak trees take over?

Photo Section



BH-4 blasts out of Scranton: In four coming-and-going views, Lackawanna Railroad freight BH-4 (Buffalo–Hoboken) departs Scranton, Pa., on September 1, 1958. Up front (opposite page), Electro-Motive F3A 606-C, F3B 801-B, F7B 632-B, and F7A 632-A strain on the 1.7-percent grade to Pocono Summit. Pushing hard behind the caboose (this page) are F3A 801-C and Fairbanks-Morse H24-66 Train Master 858. Today, Steamtown excursion trains and Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad Alco-powered freights tackle this hill, but isn't it nice that John J. MacDonald was here with camera and Kodachrome 51 years ago?







Jim Shaughnessy

Downgrade through Dundas: The entire length of Canadian National Extra 6251 East is visible from a perch above the little station of Dundas, Ont., on CNR's Toronto–London–Sarnia main line. The class U-2-h Northern type is leading its train down the Niagara Escarpment, a helper grade for westbounds climbing out of the Lake Ontario basin, in this 1957 view.

Santa Fe at San Diego: Early in 1952 (left), two sailors hold their pose for a time exposure by fellow Navy man Dick Steinheimer at the Santa Fe depot in San Diego. Beyond them simmers big 4-8-4 No. 3760, just in with the last train of the day from Los Angeles. The large wall map rendered in ceramic tile shows San Diego's location at the southwest corner of the Santa Fe system.



Photo Section

Heavyweight glory: This massive wall of riveted steel thundering past the Chicago & North Western depot at Geneva, Ill., on a cold morning in the 1940's is the first section of train 8, the *Los Angeles Challenger*. Operated by Union Pacific west of Omaha, the *Challenger* was a lower-priced alternative to the extra-fare *City of Los Angeles* diesel-powered streamliner. Compared to the *City's* bright new lightweight equipment, the *Challenger's* old heavyweight cars may have seemed dowdy, but they rode as solidly as when they were built. Up front: one of the North Western's big 4-6-4's or 4-8-4's.

Henry J. McCord



Photo Section



Two photos, Henry J. McCord

Early E's at ease: Baltimore & Ohio EA cab unit No. 56 and an EB booster soak up the sun between runs near St. Louis Union Station. B&O 56-56x was the last of six EA-EB sets that Electro-Motive Corp. built for the road in 1936-37, the first in the builder's long line of E-unit passenger diesels. Although B&O used EA-EB sets for a time on some St. Louis-Chicago trains of its Alton Railroad subsidiary, the date of this photo—thought to be early 1947, after Gulf, Mobile & Ohio acquired control of the Alton—suggests that these pioneering E's are here on strictly B&O business.

High-hooded Alco: At Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in the late 1940's, the engineer of Milwaukee Road switcher 1603 shares a light moment with a straw-hatted gentleman—a railroad official, perhaps? Alco built No. 1603 in March 1939, before it adopted model designations for its diesels; locomotive-watchers would later dub it an HH660, for its high-hood, 660 h.p. configuration (the "DAS-6z" on the cab is the railroad's classification). Powered by prime movers of the 531 or 539 type, 177 HH-series units were built during 1931-40, ranging from 600 to 1,000 h.p., for more than 40 railroads.



1603

DAS-6Z





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SHOP AT

Downtown depot pairs

Omaha: Union Station and Burlington Station

Omaha's first railroad was, of course, the Union Pacific, which began construction of its portion of the first transcontinental railroad here in 1865. In the Golden Spike year of 1869, UP built a depot south of downtown, 2,000 feet west of its Missouri River bridge, which opened in 1872. Three years later, UP completed a new station just to the east whose trainshed and lack of grandeur inspired its "Cowshed" nickname. Meanwhile, in 1870 CB&Q predecessor Burlington & Missouri River Railroad reached Omaha from the south and established a terminal just south of the UP's. Work on a union station for all Omaha railroads began in 1890, but soon stalled because of poor economic conditions—particularly the UP's. Tired of waiting, CB&Q built its own station, a Greek Revival affair that opened in 1898; UP completed Union Station 600 feet north of Burlington Station the following year. By the early 1920's, the UP station had become inadequate, and a true union depot was again considered. Bringing CB&Q trains into a new Union was deemed impractical, so the road engaged the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst & White to update Burlington Station. Across the tracks, Art Deco-style Union Station, designed by Gilbert Underwood, took shape. The renovated Q depot opened in 1930; the new UP station in '31. Chicago Great Western moved out of Union at this time, becoming the only road besides the Q in Burlington Station, vs. UP, C&NW, Omaha Road, MoPac, Wabash, Milwaukee, Rock Island, and Illinois Central in Union. Amtrak vacated Burlington Station in the 1970's for an "Amshack" next door; Union lost its passenger trains in 1971, but soon became a museum [see pages 58–59].

- 1 Union Station headhouse
- 2 Concourse over tracks and connection between stations
- 3 Burlington Station headhouse
- 4 10th Street viaduct
- 5 11th Street viaduct
- 6 Union Station platform tracks: 13 through, 5 stub
- 7 UP commissary and division offices
- 8 UP to North Platte and west; CB&Q to Lincoln and west
- 9 CB&Q mail and express building
- 10 Burlington Station platform tracks: 5 through, 2 stub
- 11 CB&Q coach yard
- 12 Freight bypass tracks: 2 UP, 1 CB&Q
- 13 UP to Missouri River bridge and east
- 14 CB&Q to south and to UP Missouri River bridge and east

Photo: Durham Museum collection, circa late 1940's. Research: Robert S. McGonigal.



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Baltimore: Pennsylvania Station and Mount Royal Station

The Baltimore & Ohio began its pioneering railroad to the Ohio River on July 4, 1828, at Mount Clare in the southwest part of its namesake city. The first railroad in the area north of downtown pictured here, begun in 1829, was the Baltimore & Susquehanna, a predecessor of the Northern Central, which itself became part of the Pennsylvania. Two other PRR components—Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore and Baltimore & Potomac—reached this location in 1873 via the new Union and B&P tunnels, respectively. The three roads used a single depot, and were joined in 1876 by Western Maryland trains, which originated/terminated at WM's Hillen Station, a mile to the south. In 1886, a new Union Station replaced the 1873 structure. Pennsy built the third and final Union Station in 1911 to the plans of Kenneth Murchison, architect of several other important stations. Renamed Pennsylvania Station in the 1920's, the depot gained catenary in 1935 as part of PRR's New York–Washington electrification . . . but this wasn't the first electrified railroad in the neighborhood. That honor went to B&O's Belt Railroad, a 7.2-mile line opened in 1895 that bypassed ferries and street running. The main feature of the new line was Howard Street Tunnel, whose 1.4-mile length and 0.8 percent grade prompted B&O to install the world's first general-purpose railroad electrification here. At the north end of the tunnel, the road built a new depot, Mount Royal Station. Like many other major B&O buildings, including the B&O Railroad Museum's roundhouse, Mount Royal was designed by E. Francis Baldwin. After B&O passenger service ended here in 1961, the Maryland Institute College of Art moved in, making Mount Royal an early, highly acclaimed example of "adaptive reuse" of historic buildings. Renovated in 2007, the station—including its 400-foot-long trainshed—is a National Historic Landmark. Penn Station is still very much a railroad station, a major stop for Amtrak intercity and MARC commuter trains, plus a light-rail line. A hotel is planned for its top three floors.

- 1 Mount Royal Station headhouse and trainshed
- 2 B&O to Bayview (Baltimore) and Philadelphia
- 3 North portal, Howard Street Tunnel; B&O to Calvert Street Station (Baltimore), Washington, and Point of Rocks, Md.
- 4 Mount Royal Avenue
- 5 Charles Street • 6 St. Paul Street • 7 Calvert Street
- 8 Jones Falls waterway
- 9 Penn Station headhouse
- 10 Concourse over 7 through platform tracks
- 11 Penn Station coach yard • 12 Post Office building
- 13 "Highline" freight bypass around Penn Station; also used by WM trains to/from Hillen Station
- 14 Union Junction tower
- 15 PRR to Union Tunnels and Philadelphia
- 16 PRR to B&P Tunnel, WM connection (Fulton Junction, 2 miles), and Washington; also to Northern Central line to Harrisburg, Pa.

Photo: Tom Hollyman for Pennsylvania Railroad, circa 1950. Research: Robert S. McGonigal.

CLASSICS
TODAY

MAIN WAITING ROOM

Art Deco masterpiece

But for the lack of people, it could be 1945, not May 2008, in Omaha Union Station's 76x160-foot main hall. The ornate ceiling is 60 feet above the patterned terrazzo floor.

Now a multifaceted museum, Omaha Union Station is a dazzling monument to the golden age of rail travel

By Robert S. McGonigal • Photos by the author

Most historic railroad stations—whether still serving passengers, converted to other uses, or even preserved as museums—have been altered from their classic-era appearance. However beautifully restored, old stations often incorporate significant modifications, whether to accommodate the requirements of modern travel or to house new functions. A dazzling exception is Omaha Union Station, home to The Durham Museum. Although the Durham contains a wealth of exhibits and hosts numerous and varied activities each year, its building still exudes the atmosphere of a mid-20th century rail passenger terminal.

As outlined on pages 54–55, Union Pacific opened Omaha Union Station on January 15, 1931, to serve its own trains and those of six other railroads. Los Angeles-based architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood designed OUS, one of at least 17 depots he did for the UP. Commenting on his design, Underwood said, “We have tried to express the distinctive character of the railroad—strength, power, and masculinity.” He achieved this by employing a robust interpretation of the then-new Art Deco style, including six stylized sculptures of railroad men that flank the building’s three entrances.

Like other depots, Union Station experienced slack times in the 1930’s, a crush of traffic during World War II, then a gradual decline through the

1950’s and ’60’s. Being relatively new, OUS was not subject to the remodeling that disfigured many other depots. The last regular passenger train, UP’s east-bound “City of Everywhere” streamliner, departed on May 2, 1971.

Fortunately, the Art Deco masterpiece in UP’s hometown was seen as a civic asset, and the railroad donated it to the city in 1973. Two years later, Union Station reopened as the Western Heritage Museum, displaying small regional history exhibits and private collections. By 1995, with the building feeling its age, a new, broader vision had emerged, and the museum began a \$22 million renovation and expansion. Charles and Margre Durham were driving forces behind the project, prompting a 1997 name change to the Durham Western Heritage Museum (it became The Durham Museum in 2008).

All the station’s public spaces were on the level of the 10th Street viaduct, with support facilities below. This has enabled museum exhibits and other functions to be placed at ground level, while leaving the ornate main-level spaces as they were when the building was a functioning station. In the breathtaking Main Waiting Room, which retains its original benches, chandeliers, illuminated signage, and other details, only the relative lack of people suggests there are no trains to board—and even this is partly offset

by several life-size sculptures representing various types of passengers. In the area behind the 12 ticket windows, the gift shop has been cleverly and unobtrusively placed. Just off the waiting room, the former newsstand has been deftly converted into a working soda fountain. Beyond that, the former dining room and lunch counter, murals still intact, is now a multipurpose room, available, as is the main hall, for parties and other functions.

Although the concourse over the tracks has long since been removed, its

vestibule remains, providing access from the main hall to the lower level via a new stairway. The long Trish and Dick Davidson Gallery, underwritten by the former UP CEO and his wife, presents mostly



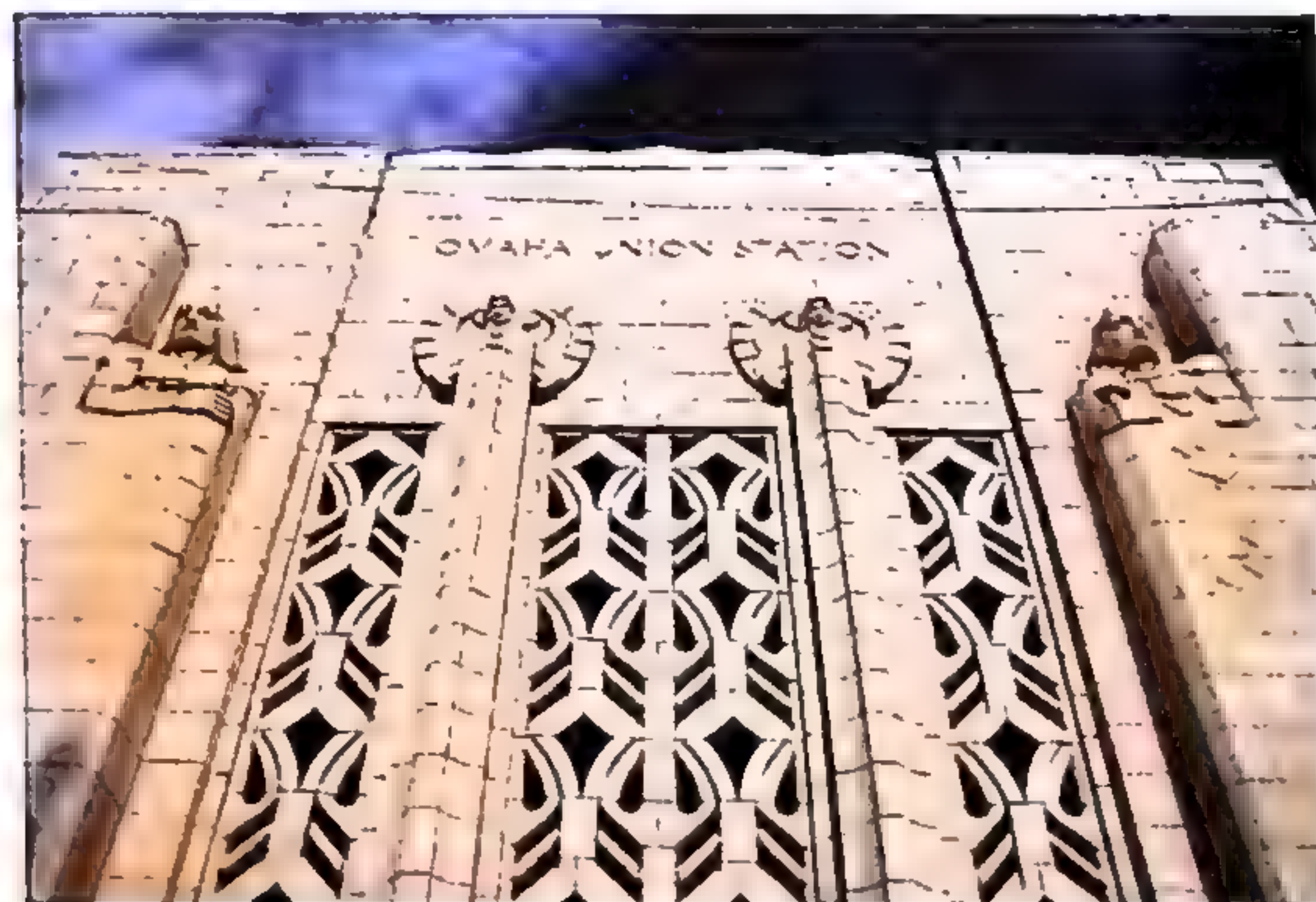
An Omaha-Council Bluffs streetcar is in the Davidson Gallery.

railroad exhibits including UP 4-6-0 No. 1243 (Cooke, 1890), a UP sleeper, an SP lounge, and other cars on the former depot Track 1. Other galleries, focusing on aspects of the history and culture of Omaha and the West, occupy the lower level, along with classrooms and, in the station’s old boiler house, a 256-seat theater.

Complementing Omaha Union Station’s remarkable survival is an endless parade of UP and BNSF freights just beyond its windows. To learn more, go to www.durhammuseum.org. ■

More on our Web site

See postwar steam and diesel action at Omaha Union Station from the Herron Rail Video archives at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com



Signs formed of neon tubing glow at the station’s newsstand (above left), part of which is now a soda fountain for Durham Museum visitors. Above the 10th Street entrance, the exterior’s glazed terra cotta—a good material for resisting steam-era dirt—catches the afternoon sun.

STORMING *the* STEEL CITY



In 1962, Pittsburgh seemed to be a stern and forbidding fortress waiting to be taken

By J. David Ingles, with Jerry A. Pinkepank • Photos by J. David Ingles

Think back, if you are able, to 1962. Reference sources for railfans were few beyond national magazines *TRAINS* and *Railroad*. Regular steam was essentially gone, and a few of us who had become diesel devotees rallied around *Extra 2200 South*, a newsletter about locomotives just begun by friend Jerry A. Pinkepank. "Extra 22"—named

after his home address of 2200 S. Rundle in Lansing, Mich.—was dependent on its few dozen subscribers for every detail of news, virtually none of which was published elsewhere. The first *Diesel Spotter's Guide* was five years in Kalmbach Publishing Co.'s future, and would be a product of explorations such as the one you're about to join.

Jerry and I, and many of our X22

friends, were age 20 or so, recently mobile, and as full of curiosity and capacity to learn about the railroad world as we were empty of funds to help us explore it. Nevertheless, knowing our college spring vacations would coincide in late March, Jerry and I planned an exploratory trip—somewhere—from our Michigan homes. We were joined by our mutual Detroit-area friend, the late Hank



Yes, this is Youngstown (left), not Pittsburgh, but early in our trip a street bridge here offered a rare elevated view of a steel plant with rail activity in the foreground, in this case Youngstown & Northern Alco S2 221 at a U.S. Steel plant. Most of Erie's 16 Lima switchers were in storage at suburban Girard, like No. 654 (above), but we glimpsed two active down in a yard.

my, and we'd become curious about its obscure little railroads whose names brought to mind cyclone plant fences topped with barbed wire: McKeesport Connecting; Pittsburgh, Chartiers & Youghiogheny (yock-a-GAIN-ee); Montour; Pittsburgh, Allegheny & McKees Rocks; Aliquippa & Southern; Monongahela Connecting. The *Official Guide* listed five railroads alone whose name began with "Pittsburgh," excluding the Pittsburgh & Shawmut (no "h"), which didn't go to the Steel City anyway.

To us, Pittsburgh's railroads were a stern and forbidding fortress waiting to be stormed.

Ken Douglas, a diesel historian and X22 contributor who grew up in Los Angeles and had migrated to Pittsburgh, helped immeasurably in our planning. He couldn't join our tour since we'd be there during his working weekdays, but he prepped us with Steel City basics.

We left Detroit at 8 a.m. Sunday the 25th and restrained ourselves, stopping just once en route, at Detroit & Toledo Shore Line's Lang Yard, alongside I-75 in Toledo. Why? We spotted SW7 116 in a new Nickel Plate-style black-and-yellow scheme (Shore Line was half-owned by NKP and Grand Trunk Western). Six of DTSL's 10 GP7's, plus SW7 117 and SW9 120, were on hand in the old blue-and-yellow colors. By 9 a.m. we were on the Ohio Turnpike.

It was past noon as we neared Youngstown, and we began to get itchy. Figuring it would be a waste of beautiful spring sunlight to not explore, we exited the Turnpike and made for Erie Lackawanna's Briar Hill facility in suburban Girard. Baldwin switchers and road-switchers, most still lettered Erie,

mingled with Erie's 16 Lima-Hamilton switchers (2 lettered EL). Reflecting the lasting effects of a recession, seven of the Limas sat in a deadline (never to run again), although we glimpsed two working down in the yard. We were off to a good start.

Our first targeted short line was the Youngstown & Northern, U.S. Steel's common carrier that linked Youngstown Sheet & Tube Division plants in Girard and McDonald. After finding a low spot in a fence by a storage line of Alco S2's, we chanced on sibling 221 working and shootable from a street overpass (left). Typical of many plant roads, Y&N was a common carrier to enable the owner to take the originating road's cut of the rate division, what Jerry termed "a successful way for big firms to effect legalized rebating." Nearby was the Youngstown & Southern, no relation to Y&N, but we didn't see the Y&S. It was a subsidiary of the Montour, itself owned by Pittsburgh & Lake Erie and the Pennsylvania, and we'd soon see the Montour and a lot of P&LE and PRR.

Youngstown, the north end of the P&LE, was focused on the Mahoning River. South of downtown, a squat Republic Steel center-cab Porter resembled a squashed bug compared with a "tall" PRR Baldwin S12 nearby. Then we noticed the P&LE passenger station, its upper floors closed. A Pittsburgh commuter train, six coaches behind two lightning-striped, olive-green GP7's, was parked for the weekend. Since New York Central was dominant in Detroit, Hank and I were trying to shoot all its diesels by number, so its subsidiary P&LE loomed large for us on this trip.

East of downtown was P&LE's Gate-

Goerke. After we were back in school, Jerry wrote up a 12-page trip report, from which many of the details and comments here are excerpted.

The available March 1962 slot turned out to be Sunday the 25th through Wednesday the 28th, and we set an ambitious goal of seeing every railroad in the Pittsburgh area. We took my father's 1961 Chevy station wagon, and we got lucky on the weather, catching the first stretch of sunny spring skies that broke a rugged winter.

Toledo surprise, and Erie minorities

Pittsburgh was a last-minute choice. Steelmaking was still driving its econo-



Gateway Yard's hump-engine trio of SW9's was idle because it was Sunday, and we secured permission to cross tracks and shoot it. The ghost of the tower, and the sign, survive today.



Jerry Pinkepank

Among dozens of dusty Pennsy road units of many makes and models at Conway, shiny SD9's stood out. Co-author Pinkepank remains convinced they were black, not "Brunswick green."

way Yard. Since it was Sunday, the hump engine—three m.u.'ed SW9's—was idle, but we got permission in the office to photograph it. EMD's were the minority here, as Youngstown was home for P&LE's remaining Alco switchers, one of which (an S4) we shot. They were P&LE's last non-EMD's, for its FM switchers had gone to NYC at Beech Grove, Ind.; the Alco RS3's to NYC at DeWitt, N.Y.; and the PA passenger units retired and scrapped locally. We left Gateway about 2:30 and got back on the turnpikes for the short trek into Pennsylvania's Beaver River valley.

At P&LE's tiny College Station yard at Beaver Falls, we found its other commuter train, led by GP7 5684 in what would be a unique black-white-and-gray scheme designed by artist Howard Fogg

for P&LE President John W. Barriger. Not far south was Rochester, Pa., at the confluence of the Beaver and Ohio rivers and the junction of PRR's Fort Wayne line, Bayard Cutoff, and Erie & Ashtabula lines. At Rochester station we found an idling westbound freight with freshly shopped F3 9508 in the lead, and quickly another freight, led by sister F3 9560, flew past with a TOFC-heavy train.

At Conway were more westbounds. Three GP9's were doubling onto empty stock cars, blocking consists including one with an FM Erie-built cab, an F7A, and two Baldwin Sharks. "There was open iron somewhere in that tangle, though," wrote Jerry, "because about six Geeps materialized to come slamming past little Freedom station at a good 60." A corpse deep in the yard caught our

eye: Wabash FA1 809. Since its 15 FA's matched its 15 GE U25B's on order, we correctly surmised the Alcos would be trade-ins, and 809 was Erie-bound.

In those days, things were looser and we were young enough to not be shy about driving into the heart of Conway to check things out. (It helped if you looked like you belonged, didn't run, and didn't step on railheads—good advice in any era.) Near the roundhouse, we had to give up all hope of writing down engine numbers, for we found dozens of units: Sharks, Erie-builts, FA's, Geeps, FM road-switchers, and some glittering SD9's. The Baldwins were chiefly from Crestline, Ohio; east of Conway, the PRR main seemed to be heavy on GP9's, F's, and Eries. The SD9's were hump power, one of the few classes PRR kept shiny. We photographed what we could from near the car, then drove down to the Wabash FA and shot it from a few tracks away. We left Conway about 6 p.m.

Crossing the Ohio River, we drove through Aliquippa and saw the works of Jones & Laughlin Steel, which indicated where we'd see the Aliquippa & Southern. Sure enough, we soon spotted several green-and-yellow EMD switchers prowling in the plant. (We didn't get any A&S photos this trip, but that would be rectified on a 1969 plant tour.) The sun was behind the bluffs by the time we found P&LE's Aliquippa station, just as the sole remaining *Steel King*, daily 273 for Cleveland, breezed in at 6:25 behind GP7 5685 with one P&LE and two Erie coaches ["The Pittsburgh Train," Fall 2003 CLASSIC TRAINS]. We tied up for the night in nearby Coraopolis.

P&LE's passenger parade

Being diesel-oriented and, for this trip, focused on "local" roads (*i.e.*, those we couldn't see at home), we largely ignored Pittsburgh's passenger trains. Pennsy, for instance, ran Monday-Friday commuter trains on six routes, all powered by RS3's, a favorite diesel of ours, but to our regret in later years, we saw not one PRR passenger train. (Three routes each had one pair of commuter trains, while Beaver Falls and Burgettstown, to the west, each had two; the main line east to Braddock, Trafford, and Derry had eight.)

P&LE was a different story. We wanted to be at its Coraopolis depot for the morning passenger parade, and arrived just in time to photograph B&O's westbound seven-car *Shenandoah* rumbling through (on trackage rights) behind an E8A-E8B-E6A trio. First for P&LE itself was No. 268 from College, with the attractive GP7 5684 and three coaches, at 7:15. B&O's eastbound *Shenandoah*



Hank Goerke

They called it "the Zebra"—uniquely-painted GP7 5684 powering P&LE commuter train 268, which followed B&O's westbound *Shenandoah* to begin "the parade" at Coraopolis.

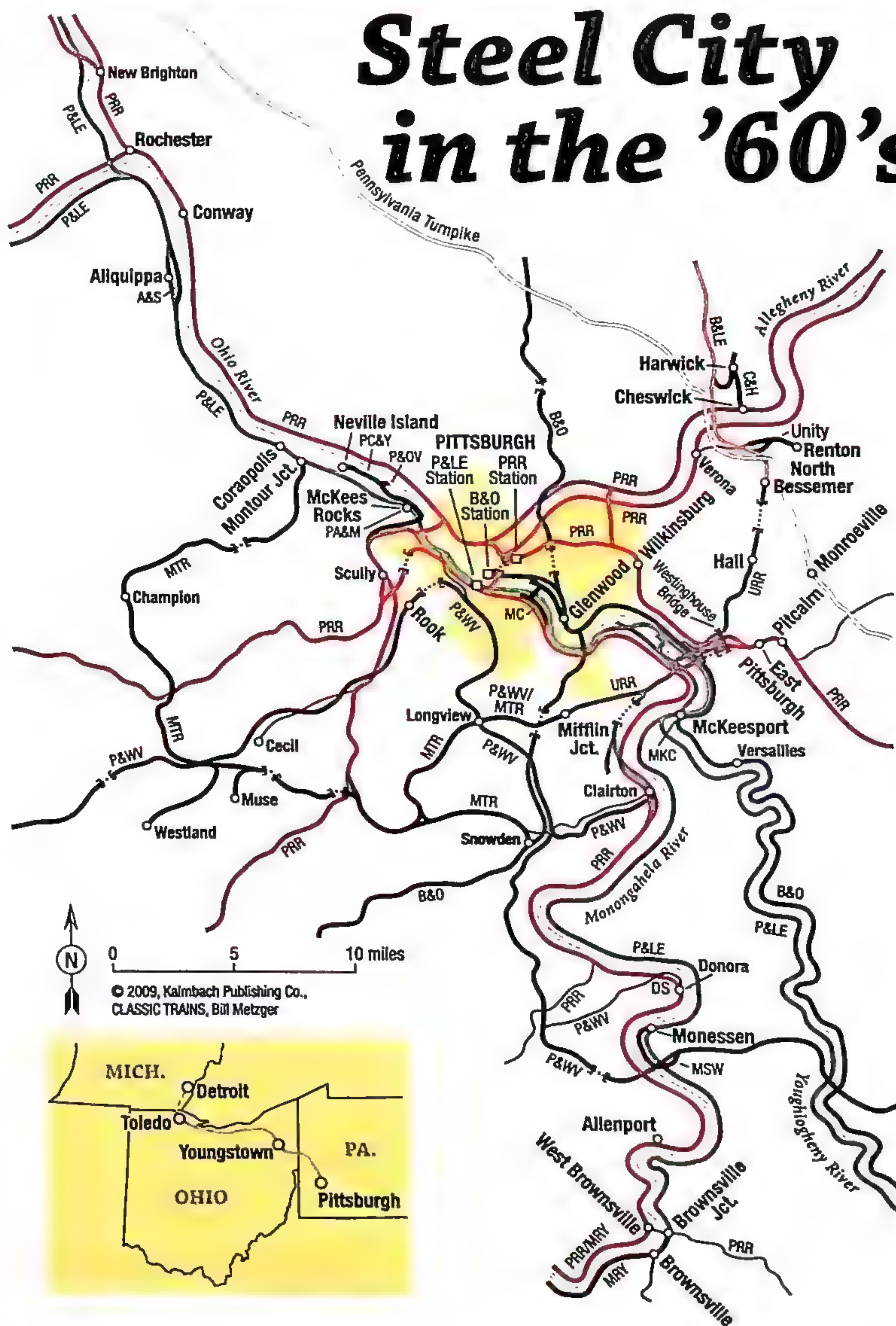
caught us by surprise, so our next photo was P&LE 266, the commuter from Youngstown. Most remarkable of P&LE's three inbounds, though, was the last one, 280 at 8 a.m., which highballed Coraopolis: GP7 5736, a stainless-steel NYC combine, and 10&6 sleeper *Pocono River* [page 69, Summer 2008 CLASSIC TRAINS]. The sleeper left Toronto at 8:40 p.m. on a CP-TH&B train to Buffalo and was forwarded by NYC 27 to Ashtabula, Ohio; by NYC 281 to Youngstown; and finally by P&LE for arrival in Pittsburgh at 8:20 a.m.

"Notable on P&LE trains," Jerry wrote, "was the lack of head-end cars, since Barriger had given up the mail contracts, sold the RPO cars to Quebec North Shore & Labrador, and stopped handling checked baggage." P&LE worked with 17 standard coaches.

Across Coraopolis at the shop of the Montour, a 51-mile coal-hauler that looped south and east from headquarters, 10 of its 13 switchers (all SW9's but for one SW7) were being readied to go. Three were in trios, while No. 84 was pattering around by itself, hostling the other units. The small, tightly curved Montour Junction yard was packed with empty hoppers, which would vanish behind the trios for on-line mines and later interchange with Montour's owners: P&LE right here and the Pennsylvania at McDonald.

Next we crossed onto Neville Island, a township in the Ohio River stretching from Coraopolis to McKee's Rocks. The western end was residential, the eastern end heavily industrial, with smaller plants dominated by the sprawling works of Pittsburgh Coke & Chemical, whose common carrier was the Pittsburgh & Ohio Valley. With permission to photograph, we got a guided tour by

Steel City in the '60's





The PC&Y bridge offered this comprehensive view of P&LE's McKees Rocks shops. After securing permission downtown, we would return twice for more photos, once at night.

the superintendent. At work was SW1 No. 5, formerly Allegheny & South Side 101 (which had quit two years before) and still in A&SS green and white. Two Whitcomb 65-tonners were stored: No. 1 still with its Buda engines, and No. 2, ballasted to 72 tons and given Cummins engines (but still too light for P&OV's work). Both [photo, page 68] were Army veterans of service in Italy. While we were touring, the island's other railroad, P&LE subsidiary Pittsburgh, Chartiers & Youghiogeny, sent SW9 No. 3 across from McKees Rocks for the day. PC&Y, with 17 route-miles, had five switchers, FM H10-44 No. 1 (stored since 1958, we would learn) and SW9's 2-5 (in use).

Barriger hospitality

McKees Rocks, site of P&LE's diesel shop, was next. We sought permission to take photos but were sent downtown for clearance. First, though, we had another McKees Rocks pike to see: Pittsburgh, Allegheny & McKees Rocks, 13 track-miles nestled close to the P&LE yard and operated with two units. By luck we found green GE 45-tonner No. 1 working near the company's offices.

After an inadvertent detour that put us on a steep hill, with active Pittsburgh Railways trolley tracks, overlooking

downtown across the Monongahela River (the "Mon"), we arrived at the P&LE station just as Mr. Barriger himself was leaving for lunch, in the rear seat of a purple Cadillac. Our requests for McKees Rocks photo permits got us referred to his offices on the third floor. Two secretaries warmly received us. D. B. Fleming, P&LE general manager, authorized our permits and turned us over to R. R. Firestone, Barriger's administrative assistant. First, the secretaries presented each of us with a set of the Howard Fogg color P&LE postcards. Then, Mr. Firestone asked us which cards were our favorites and led us into a room where, in a cabinet, P&LE had suitable-for-framing 11x14- and 16x20-inch prints of the Fogg paintings, from which we had our pick!

In Firestone's office, we were each given a tie clip (depicting a P&LE 2-8-4), a schematic operating map of P&LE, and an accurate railroad map of P&LE's territory with stock control listed for all railroads over 5 miles in length plus enlargements of the switching districts of Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Cleveland, and Buffalo. Why was rail hospitality "so right" in those days?

Downstairs, we passed through the cathedral-like waiting room of the fine old station and had an early lunch; you can still do so today, at Station Square, but it'll cost you a *lot* more. From the platforms, where P&LE SW9 8960 was breaking up the morning *Steel King* con-

sist, we got a good look at the piers from the bridge over the Mon, built in 1904 by George Gould in his thrust of the Wabash (later Pittsburgh & West Virginia) into downtown Pittsburgh to his Wabash Terminal. (The bridge was dismantled in 1948, two years after the ornate terminal was destroyed by fire. Pittsburghers say these events stimulated the revival of downtown.)

Our next goal was just across the river—via the Smithfield Street Bridge used by the South Hills streetcar routes—the 11:40 a.m. departure of B&O 22, the RDC *Daylight Speedliner* for Washington and Baltimore. The train recently had been moved from the P&LE station, where B&O through trains called, to B&O's stub-end Grant Street terminal. B&O ran seven weekday shuttles to and from McKeesport and Versailles, 17 miles out, with Budd RDC's. The *Speedliner* was ready to leave as we showed up, with RDC1's 1909 and 1908, plus RDC3 1961, converted by B&O into the only RDC diner by installing a galley in the mail-express end. B&O had ultra-low fares in effect—\$11.63, before federal tax, took you one-way to Washington (vs. \$15.55 on B&O's through trains), with no charge for the return on a 30-day round-trip ticket.

Rook, operating hub for P&WV, to the south of Mount Washington (the bluff on the south bank of the Mon), was our next target. Highway access through the bluffs is via the Fort Pitt tunnels and



the older Liberty Tubes to the east. Trolleys had their own tunnel (and still do). Again by chance, we reached Rook just as the power was being traded on the westbound *Alpha-Jet* freight, flagship of the "Alphabet Route," whose nickname can be understood in that the New England-Chicago freight routing was originally over NH-L&NE-RDG-WM-P&WV-W&LE-NKP. You "Fallen Flags" experts know how to translate that.

The power swap was an A-B-B-B-A set of Western Maryland F7's coming off for three Nickel Plate road-switchers (two Geeps plus EMD-engined Baldwin AS16 322). NKP units, out of Bellevue, Ohio, ran through via Pittsburgh Junction, Ohio, into Rook with P&WV crews, while WM engines came in from Hagerstown, Md., picking up P&WV crews at Connellsville, Pa. The P&WV's burly FM H20-44's alternated with the WM units. The P&WV engineer arriving on the WM F's said that the GE U25B demonstrators that recently tested on his trains had "everything but a wife." P&WV was by then virtually all-FM and had at Rook a pair and a trio of H20's plus two of its four H16-44 road-switchers. It seems odd to say it now, but the prizes at Rook were not the diesels but two ancient gray business cars, arch-windowed 100 *Longview* and 200 *Hopedale*.

The mysterious Monongahela

It was after 1 p.m. as we headed south through pleasant countryside for Browns-



SW9 84 puttered around at Montour's tight little yard, hostling sisters including three trios that soon would leave with empty hoppers on the 51-mile line's arc southwest of Pittsburgh.



Two ex-Army Whitcomb center-cabs were no longer hefty enough for Pittsburgh & Ohio Valley's work, so it used SW1 No. 5, ex-Allegheny & South Side, still in the defunct road's colors.



While we were being guided around the P&OV, PC&Y sent SW9 No. 3 across from the mainland onto Neville Island. That's Dave Ingles' dad's Chevy station wagon at left above the yard office.



At the P&LE station after lunch, as SW9 8960 worked the *Steel King's* cars, we got a good look at the stone pier (beyond the tower) remaining from George Gould's "Mon" River bridge.



Jerry Pinkepank

The three RDC's farthest from the head house at B&O's Grant Street station are about to leave for Washington as the *Daylight Speedliner*. The two closest to us are the Versailles shuttle.

ville and the Monongahela Railway, a onetime Class 1 that was a mystery to us (say the full word Muh-NON-guh-HAY-luh). All we knew was that it was owned by Pennsy, P&LE, and B&O; had only Baldwin switchers; and ran from Brownsville south along its namesake river to Fairmont, W.Va. We secured photo permission from the office of Superintendent C. H. Seibart in downtown Brownsville, then drove to the South Brownsville terminal for a tour, guided by a Mr. Kovac.

Monongahela's 27 identical olive-green S12's, almost a decade old, often were multiplied in threes—or even fours and fives as they aged. Monday was a slack day, so quite a few were present. The pike worked 36 hours a week, days

and afternoons, with an average weekly carloading total of 2,000. Kovac said the Baldwins were "expensive to repair—a GM traction motor can be rewound for \$900 to \$1500, but I have \$24,000 tied up in five Westinghouse motors." An inquiry to EMD had revealed it had no equivalent-size unit to do MRY's work. The railroad had tried EMD's and Alcos, then bought its Baldwins sight unseen. It was, of course, those big Westinghouse motors that allowed Monongahela's transportation department do the work of road engines with switchers.

As with Pittsburgh & West Virginia's old business cars, the prizes at South Brownsville were not the Monongahela S12's but some four-wheel "bobber" cabooses, stored in good shape. Larger

cabooses were being sold to state troopers for hunting lodges, but a bobber was available f.o.b. Brownsville for \$175. Alas, Dad's Chevy wagon had insufficient room for one.

Following the Monongahela River back toward Pittsburgh, we chanced upon PRR's West Brownsville terminal, where sat Sharks, Erie-builts, an RS3, and a pair of FA2's. Up at Allenport we caught gray Pittsburgh Steel SW900 No. 6 outside the fence at a small fabricating plant. The firm's main mill, across on the Mon's east bank at Monessen, was home to common carrier Monessen Southwestern, and by patrolling streets along the plant, we were able to shoot gray SW8 No. 22 over the fence.

We wanted to find the Donora Southern, but we didn't know that U.S. Steel was closing the big American Steel & Wire plant that it served and that it was down to one crew a day. *Railroad* magazine diesel roster expert Sy Reich, whose acquaintance we would make later, told us the DS units had been scattered. [See "Second Section" for an update on all Pittsburgh railroads from 1962.] Thirty years before, the 4-mile-long plant had spun the cables for the Golden Gate Bridge. As we entered Pittsburgh on Route 51 at dusk, we spotted through the trees, high on the bluffs above us on private right of way, an inbound PCC streetcar pacing us. After dinner, we did some trolley-watching with Ken Douglas near his Wilkinsburg apartment.

East side discoveries

Continuing our counterclockwise area tour, Tuesday morning found us first in downtown Pittsburgh, restocking on Kodachrome II, surely a sign of success. A 36-exposure roll went for \$2.25, cheaper than in Detroit.

En route to Glenwood, B&O's east-side shop, we passed Jones & Laughlin's Pittsburgh Works, and through gaps in a parking-lot fence we could see units of J&L's Monongahela Connecting ("Mon Con"): green-and-yellow S2's and big (80- to 132-ton) GE center-cabs. Jerry went into the office to seek permission to shoot from the lot, and was "aided by a gentleman who told security 'these are just boys with little Kodaks'—as I stood before him with a professional-grade 35mm reflex hanging around my neck!"

While Jerry was inside, Hank and I were able to photograph a B&O freight that stormed uphill out of Glenwood at us, bound for the old BR&P line toward western New York state. Up front was a Baldwin trio of two Shark-nose cab units spliced by AS16 6206; shoving on the rear were two F7's.

Glenwood was a disappointment,



At Rook, P&WV presented five of its FM H20-44's (above), plus two H16-44's, and we were just in time to see the *Alpha-Jet* freight trade Western Maryland F7's for NKP units.

with only F7's and, in the distance, C&O Alco RSD7 6808 active. In the deadline were an FA, three Shark B units, an AS16, and B&O's two former New York, Ontario & Western FT A-B sets. Wrote Jerry, "The atmosphere was gloomy, what you'd expect of a railroad that had lost \$30 million the previous year."

McKeesport was next, and en route we stopped to shoot a PCC plus some units of U.S. Steel's big terminal pike, Union Railroad: SW1 476, SW9's 563-564 (which we'd learn later were ex-Missabe), and Baldwin AS616 627.

None of McKeesport Connecting's Alco S2's wandered outside the fences of USS's National Tube Division, but we did get a P&LE SW9 there. We forgot to look up the "P-Mickey," P&LE's local subsidiary, but we'd learn PMcK&Y had no lettered units anyway. In downtown McKeesport, we got B&O's eastbound *Daylight Speedliner* in between some buildings, then a 64-car Brownsville-bound P&LE freight, coming down a street (on an alignment that soon would be moved) behind three GP7's and crossing the Youghiogeny River bridge.

We were headed to our third and last portion of the area, north of the Mon, largely rural and small-town versus the crowded industrialized valleys we'd been exploring. Still in such a valley,



It seems odd to say so today, but the prizes at Rook might have been the two wooden, open-platform business cars *Longview* and *Hopedale* (above), rather than the three roads' diesels.



After determining that EMD and Alco did not offer what it needed, the Monongahela bought 27 Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton S12 switchers, sight unseen—but they were expensive to repair.

CRITTERS AND OTHER CREATURES

"Critters," a nickname for industrial-size diesels, were of course plentiful in the Pittsburgh area, and we stumbled across our share. The prize of our trip was 32-year-old Westinghouse Electric No. 8 (right), which happened to park at a switch outside the East Pittsburgh plant just as we drove by en route to the Union Railroad. In the gallery below, note that Cheswick & Harmar second No. 5 was photographed in 1976, on the eve of the road's shutdown. During our '62 visit, her predecessor was inside the shop as the transplant was under way. Parked behind second 5 is C&H 7, one of nine GE 60-tonners built for the Army in 1942. —J.D.I.



Westinghouse 8's friendly crew told us about sibling No. 9, and of nearby PRR Baldwins.



Republic Steel Porter 307 in Youngstown was like "a squashed bug."



Pittsburgh & Ohio Valley Whitcombs 2 and 1 were Army vets from Italy.



Would "Pittsburgh, Allegheny & McKees Rocks" fit on GE No. 1's cab?



Ken Douglas

Cheswick & Harmar second 5, ex-Armco B-72, replaced a 1933 sibling.



Hank Goerke

Pittsburgh Steel SW900 No. 6, turns out, was ex-Donora Southern 806.



Hank Goerke

Monessen Southwestern SW8 No. 22, from the street over the fence.



From a parking lot and through the tree branches, but with permission, we photographed the "Mon Con's" exotic old GE center-cabs and "routine" Alco switchers.

Turtle Creek, looking for the Union's East Pittsburgh headquarters, after going under the soaring, arched George Westinghouse Memorial Bridge we inadvertently discovered *the* prize of the trip. In sight, outside the main Westinghouse Electric plant, appeared No. 8, which Jerry termed "an indescribable Baldwin-Westinghouse diesel switcher . . . built in 1930!" (Now we know its "visibility cab" was, like the prototype GG1, designed by Donald Dohner—see Summer 2009 CLASSIC TRAINS.)

No. 8's friendly crew [see "Second Section"] told us about twin No. 9 and 660 h.p. Baldwin No. 10, both inaccessible, but suggested we try Pitcairn Yard for PRR center-cab Limas or Baldwins. Pitcairn, an east-end yard that today is a Norfolk Southern intermodal hub, had a reputation for unfriendliness, but no matter—from its edges we could see only Geeps at the terminal. We got a Geep-powered freight and a portrait of a pair of 2,400 h.p. center-cab Baldwins.

Since the day was getting along and we'd shot some Union items, we skipped going to its offices for releases to photograph at Hall shop, having noted from a hill above its roundhouse that the boneyard had "only nine Alcos and four EMD's." Instead, we sought out North



While Jerry was inside the Mon Con office getting permission for photos, Hank and Dave were able to nab a B&O freight that charged out of Glenwood with a trio of Baldwins up front.



North of Brownsville we stumbled across PRR's West Brownsville yard, where shiny RS3 (AS-16m in Pennsy-ese) 8604 was parked next to a quartet of Baldwin Sharks. Also present: FA's.



En route to McKeesport, we chanced upon Union Railroad's curvy Mifflin Junction yard, where we found "pure" (vs. some re-engined with EMD's) Baldwin AS616 627 pushing on the hump.



We didn't seek out Pittsburgh's streetcars, being content to photograph them as we saw them, as with PCC 1631 on Route 55 in East Pittsburgh near the Westinghouse Electric plant.

In downtown McKeesport, we caught B&O's *Daylight Speedliner* in tight quarters but had better luck with this southbound 64-car P&LE train on a stretch of doomed street trackage.

Bessemer, site of adjacent yards marking the south end of the Bessemer & Lake Erie and north end of the Union. Eventually we located the B&LE roundhouse and a friendly foreman who gave us the run of his well-kept F7's and SD7's in beautiful afternoon sunlight. "North Bess Yard" was full of hopper cars and ore jennies. Little work seemed to be done here—rather, it was just the interchange between the USS roads.

At the south end, Union had more units: EMD re-engined Baldwin DRS-66-15 No. 617 plus as-built sibling 618; NW2 555; and a cow-calf set, 708/705C, whose calf was one of several units built as standard switchers but later made into a calf by removing all cab controls, enabling the crew to see through it. (URR even ran sets in "B-A-B" fashion, with controls only in the middle unit!)

Seeking our final short lines' sites for next morning, we stopped at Unity Railways and found its lone unit, 1953 SW8 No. 53, inside "until 9 a.m.," a man said. At Harmar, on the north bank of the Allegheny River just west of B&LE's big bridge that parallels the Pennsylvania Turnpike's, we had a rare Class 1 encounter. Stopped at a signal on PRR's Conemaugh Division was a caravan waiting to go toward Conway: first a

consist of light engines, Erie-built 9488 and six GP9's; then a lone FM Train Master, 8706; and not far behind, a freight with A-B-A Sharks. (Could you beat the Pennsy for diesel diversity?) We saw but couldn't catch up with a B&LE freight, but did find an uncommon PRR GP7, 8506, at the Unity interchange. Finally, at dusk, we shot Union 708/705C leaving the tunnel at the south end of North Bess. We concluded the day with some flash and time-exposure work—with permission—across town from our Monroeville motel at P&LE's McKees Rocks shop. "But no fair shooting the derailed units," said the foreman as we headed out the door. A couple of GP7's had found the ties just before we arrived, and of course, we honored his request.

Final discoveries

Two items were left for Wednesday, the aforementioned Unity and its neighbor, Cheswick & Harmar, which we'd found locked up the evening before. After yet another film stop downtown, we headed northeast and had to cover the whole length of the wishbone-shaped Unity before locating its evasive unit—back at North Bessemer, where we'd started! Hanna Furnace owned the Unity, which connected a mine in nearby Renton with B&LE and PRR.

We finished up on Duquesne Light's C&H, where two ancient Westinghouse switchers awaited. C&H's main purpose was to move coal from Harwick Mine to the parent's Cheswick Power Station on the Allegheny at Harmarville. Inside C&H's small enginehouse was No. 5, its first diesel, bought new from Westinghouse in 1933! Outside, being reconstituted as C&H's second No. 5, was B-72, a 1935 sibling acquired from Armco Steel's Butler (Pa.) works. Her Cooper-Bessemer engines would stay as prime movers. Amazingly this little railroad, and its old units, lasted until 1976.

Could we conclude on a better note? Doubtful. From the C&H we went directly to the Turnpike, entering at 2:30 p.m., and we were back in Detroit by 7:30, despite not exceeding 65 mph and taking 40 minutes out for supper. Thanks to a lot of good luck, the kindness of many railroaders, and a little pre-trip reference work, we'd photographed more than 20 common carriers (missing just three), plus a few industrials, including diesels from nine builders . . . all in four days. We therefore concluded that our mission came amazingly close to its goal. We had stormed the fortress and come away with 35mm color treasures and a lot more knowledge, which would, over the years, prove valuable in many works. ■



The friendly foreman at Bessemer & Lake Erie's roundhouse at North Bessemer Yard gave us the run of his terminal facility, which was chock full of attractive and shiny F7's and SD7's.



Union had two TR5 cow-calf duos, plus two more calves, then made some conventional SW9's into "blind cows" by removing cab controls, such as 705C, at "North Bess" with SW9 708.



After a scenic "wild goose chase" tour of the Unity's entire 4-mile, wishbone-shaped railroad, we found SW8 No. 53 of Hanna Furnace's pike back at North Bessemer, where we'd started!



The case of the
**BLACK
MARIAS**



Louis A. Marre collection

In full A-B-A strength, the Black Marias move around the New Haven's big Cedar Hill freight yard at New Haven, Conn., in January 1946.



Bert Pennypacker collection

Externally, the Black Marias resembled shortened versions of Alco's DL108, styled by Otto Kuhler. The New Haven had 60—by far the top DL108 at—and used them in both freight and passenger service.

Obsolete before they were built, three Alco freight diesels tested in obscurity for barely a year before mechanical ills and the FA1 sent them to the scrap heap

By Preston Cook

As World War II neared its conclusion, with Allied armies advancing on the last strongholds of Germany's Third Reich, and amphibious operations island-hopping across the Pacific toward Japan, the American Locomotive Co. began to turn its attention to the postwar market for diesel freight locomotives. This future market was expected to be large, but Alco's hopes for the future rested on a design that was already from the past: a three-unit set of locomotives that had been repeatedly delayed in design and production, finally emerging from the builder's Schenectady, N.Y., plant in September 1945.

Alco had contributed mightily to the war effort, with the production of M4 Sherman tanks and gun carriages, the construction of thousands of diesel engines for the military services, and the manufacturing of numerous other components for weapons assembled by other contractors. The company had also supplied diesel switcher and road-switcher locomotives for the domestic railroads and for military rail operations overseas, but its long-standing position as the largest builder of (steam) locomotives in the United States had been challenged by the introduction and wartime application of the FT freight diesels built by Electro-Motive, by then a division of General Motors Corp. While steam locomotives were still the majority in the railroads' fleets, many had been worn out by wartime usage, and the postwar market appeared to be increasingly focused on diesels as their replacements.

Alco faced a difficult commercial situation in the postwar diesel market. It had been playing catch-up since Electro-Motive Corp. opened its new locomotive plant in La Grange, Ill., in 1936. Prior to that time, Alco had led in the production of diesel switchers, powered by heavy and reliable four-stroke prime movers manufactured by its Macintosh & Seymour subsidiary in Auburn, N.Y. Electro-Motive, using advanced-technology, two-stroke Winton Engine Co. diesels with significantly lighter welded crankcase construction, had successfully challenged Alco's market dominance, and became the leading diesel locomotive builder.

In addition to challenging Alco in switcher production, Electro-Motive had developed a market for twin-engine, streamlined diesel passenger locomotives, which by 1939 had evolved to the 2,000 h.p. model E3. Alco matched the E unit's horsepower by using a pair of 1,000 h.p., six-cylinder, 538-series engines in Rock Island locomotive 624, later designated a DL103b, and progressed with its revised 539

engine to the DL109, 60 of which were purchased by the New Haven Railroad during 1941–45. The Alco 539 engine was considerably heavier than the EMD 567, requiring more-substantial carbody construction, which resulted in a much heavier locomotive. The extra weight was detrimental to the locomotive's performance in high-speed passenger service, as well as being more expensive for Alco to construct.

ANSWERING ELECTRO-MOTIVE

Electro-Motive's introduction of the FT in 1939 left Alco at a considerable disadvantage, as it had no prime mover that would enable it to field a competitive single-engine freight locomotive. Alco management was very aware of the threat posed by Electro-Motive, and began design work in 1940 on a locomotive comparable to the FT in design, horsepower, and tractive effort. General Electric, Alco's partner in the diesel-locomotive business, had suitable traction motors with performance capability exceeding that of the Electro-Motive D7 motor, but the locomotives would have to wait for the development of a suitable diesel prime mover with power output comparable with Electro-Motive's 16-cylinder 567, and a main generator able to make use of that power.

Alco prepared plans for the new freight locomotive prior to the U.S. entry into World War II, and proposed them to Gulf Mobile & Ohio, one of its existing diesel customers and a new (from a 1940 merger) railroad in dire need of road freight diesels. But wartime emergency programs and the demands of military orders tied up all available Alco engineering talent for almost the duration of the conflict. Fred Tromel, head of Alco's engineering section during most of the war, later wrote to a friend that the Navy projects in particular absorbed a great deal of the available talent and time and resulted in the freight locomotive project being pushed back. He described Alco's staff as being greatly overextended, particularly in attempting to support a twin-block version of the 540 engine, which was a welded-crankcase adaptation of the successful 538 inline engine. The twin-block 540 had severe vibration problems and required a great deal of engineering attention.

Alco intended to use a new prime mover, designated model 241, in the planned freight units. However, delays in development of the 241 at the former Macintosh & Seymour plant in Auburn had resulted in Alco management authorizing an alternate design to be developed in Schenectady; this became the model 244 engine. By the time the test locomotives were ready for operation, the 241 had been bypassed completely, the company having committed to the 244 in postwar production locomotives. The mission of the 241 demonstrator units had shifted to proving the electrical transmission system and controls while attempting to attract customer interest in Alco road diesels. Meanwhile, the commercial situation had become even more challenging, as Baldwin Locomotive Works was preparing a line of diesel passenger and freight units, while Fairbanks, Morse & Co. was marketing its new line of locomotives, taking advantage of the publicity provided by the successful applications of its opposed-piston diesel engine in U.S. Navy submarines.



Two photos: Alco Historic Photos

The Black Marias' cabs were Spartan even by the standards of their day. On the fireman's side (above right), the seat is rudimentary and the brake-gauge panel appears not to be permanently mounted.

BIRTH OF THE BLACK MARIAS

Alco finally began construction of its prototype 241-engined freight locomotive in 1945, using carbody styling and cab features similar to those on the DL109's. This took advantage of the availability of jigs and fixtures that already existed. The three-unit demonstrator was painted solid black with no reporting marks or corporate emblems, just road numbers (1500A, B, and C), inspiring the nickname "Black Maria" (ma-RYE-ah). The heart of each unit in the A-B-A set was a 12-cylinder turbocharged 241 four-stroke engine rated at 1,500 h.p. for traction. The engine was directly coupled to a GE model GT564A traction generator. The three-unit locomotive was theoretically capable of exceeding the performance of the Electro-Motive FT, which was rated at 1,350 h.p. per unit, and Alco hoped to prove this during a series of demonstration runs on New England railroads.



Rail Photo Service: Lee Beaujon

At Canaan, Conn., on the New Haven, Maria 1500C is running solo with a Pittsfield (Mass.)–Danbury (Conn.)–New York passenger train.



Norton D. Clark

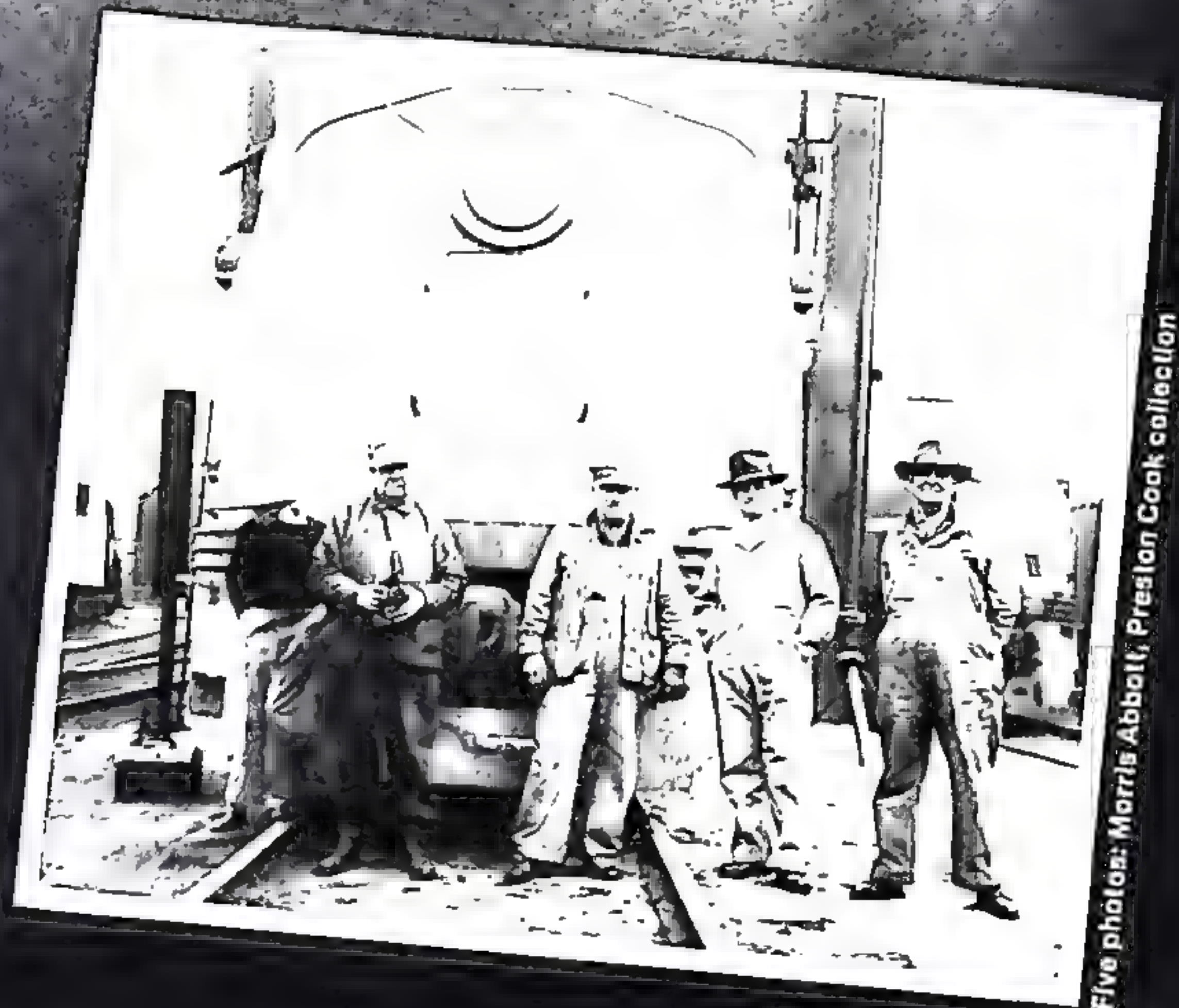
Black Marias 1500C and 1500B idle between freight runs at New Bedford, Mass., end point of a New Haven branch line, on March 4, 1946.

CAB RIDE on the Black Marias

Rare photos document a 1946
run on a New Haven freight

During one of the Black Marias' stints on the New Haven as an A-B-A set, Bill Abbott and his father Morris encountered them. Morris Abbott had made arrangements through friends on the railroad for him and his son to ride a freight train from New Haven, Conn., to Maybrook, N.Y. Accompanying them was a family friend who was an engineer on the Dutch railways, and had done business with Morris before World War II, supplying tulip bulbs for sale in the United States.

Bill recalls that with the engineer and fireman, plus the road foreman who showed up to accompany them on the trip, there were too many people to all ride in the cab, so he was chosen to ride in the caboose. Consequently, his memory of the trip behind the Black Marias is of a view up a mile of freight cars while bracing for any unexpected slack action. Up front, his father took numerous pictures from the cab. Although the date of the trip is lost to history, the photos were processed in 1946 and have remained in



Five photos: Morris Abbott, Preston Cook collection

At Maybrook (from left) Bill Abbott, the NH engineer and fireman, the Abbotts' Dutch friend, and Morris Abbott stand before the Black Marias; in the background are a steam locomotive and a DL109.

the Abbott family collection for 60 years. They are the first pictures to surface that were taken on board the Black Marias while they were in service.

Upon arrival at Maybrook (and before the Abbotts returned to New Haven on a DL109-powered freight), Morris took a photo of the crew lined up in front of the Black Marias. The point of interest was that the engines were new and something the railroad was testing—there was no way of knowing that in a short time the three new diesels would end up in a scrap yard.—Preston Cook



A sampling of photos from Morris Abbott's Black Maria cab ride on the New Haven's Maybrook Line begins with the train passing the depot at Danbury, Conn. (upper left). Next, two DL109's appeared on an eastbound freight (upper middle). At Hopewell Junction, N.Y. (upper right), a steam engine switched beneath the highway overpass. The highlight came as the train curved on the elevated approach to the Poughkeepsie Bridge (far left) and neared the 3,093-foot-long, 212-foot-high main spans over the Hudson River, where the double track became a gantlet track to center weight on the bridge (left).



C. W. Jernstrom collection

Even as the Black Marias were being road-tested, Alco was completing and delivering the first examples of its postwar mass-production freight locomotive. Ordered by the GM&O, the first FA-FB-FA set was initially painted black and numbered 1500-1501-1502 for Alco publicity purposes.

The concept of freight locomotives being constructed as separable units rather than drawbar-connected sets had been established during the production of the FT, with several customers specifying units with couplers, and others converting some of their drawbar-equipped FT's after delivery. Consequently, the Black Marias were built with couplers and with the corner steps and safety appliances required on separable locomotives. In anticipation that the Marias might be required to operate with existing DL109's on the New Haven, they were equipped with DL109-compatible multiple-unit connections, as well as pass-through steam lines on the A units so they could operate between a boiler-equipped DL109 and a passenger train. Interestingly, the Marias also carried a second set of m.u. receptacles, which were compatible with the most common type used on the FT.

The Alco trio was equipped with an unusual road truck, with equalizers that curved around the top of the journal boxes and were pin-connected into a spring linkage hung outboard of the truck transom. These trucks resulted from a 1944 design project by Alco engineer Alfred W. Bruce. Road-diesel design practice of the time was to use a swing-hanger truck with a combination of leaf elliptical springs and coil springs. The elliptical springs provided some motion damping through the effect of friction between the adjacent leaves of the springs. The Black Maria trucks were designed for all-coil-spring suspension, with friction dampers at the overhung ends of the equalizers. Apparently the advantages were not sufficient to justify retaining the design, as Alco's subsequent road-diesel production reverted to the swing-hanger truck.

Some of the decisions made in rushing the Black Marias to production would prove troublesome during their testing. In an effort to speed the construction of the long-overdue 241 engines, Alco had approved the use of cast crankshafts rather than more durable forged shafts that would have required waiting for the building of suitable forging dies. The cast crankshafts proved inadequate; specifying them was a critical error that would contribute to the Marias' early demise.

THE MARIAS ON THE ROAD

In September 1945, the Black Marias departed Alco's Schenectady plant in an almost-finished condition for their first tests on the nearby Delaware & Hudson. After a successful stint on the D&H, the units were then taken to the New Haven, where they were ran in a variety of configurations, sometimes as an A-B-A set, and sometimes broken up to operate as an A-B freight set while the remaining A unit, temporarily regearbed for high-speed operation, ran in passenger service. Unless a Maria was accompanied by a DL109, operation on passenger trains had to be done in weather when steam heat was not required. The Marias' lone steam genera-

tor, located in the B unit, had capacity adequate for layover heating of the locomotives while the engines were shut down, but was not intended to heat a full passenger train.

While the demonstrators were out on the railroads, the staff at Alco was busy working on their replacements. The postwar freight locomotive that became the FA1 was initially called the "1500" in Alco advertising, the company not yet having learned the limitations of a horsepower-based product naming system.

The company developed a 16-cylinder version of the 241 used in the Black Marias in preparation for the introduction of a 2,000 h.p. passenger locomotive that would replace the DL109. In early 1945 this locomotive briefly appeared in Alco advertising artwork, displaying many of the features that would eventually emerge in the units that would later be designated "PA1." The artwork was a curious mixture of Alco and Electro-Motive styling features, with the body resembling the PA from the windshield back, the nose design clearly mimicking the DL109, and skirting applied to the trucks similarly to the Electro-Motive E5 units built for the Burlington Route.

ON TO MAINE, AND THEN OBLIVION

In fall 1946, the Black Marias went to the Bangor & Aroostook in Maine for testing under extreme winter conditions. (During their brief careers, they also tested on the Erie Railroad, venturing at least as far west as Marion, Ohio.) On the BAR, they operated mostly out of Oakfield, assigned to heavy trains intended to stretch their capabilities to the limit. Those limits were soon discovered. First, one of the cab units suffered a broken crankshaft. This was an ominous precursor to a much larger problem, as Alco was also applying cast crankshafts to the 244-series prime movers in the first production FA1's for the GM&O, and they would prove equally troublesome.

Immediately after the crankshaft failure, another Maria failed with an internal baffle in the main generator breaking loose and irreparably damaging the machine. With this, Alco withdrew the Black Marias from service. The failures on the Bangor & Aroostook resulted in the road becoming essentially an all-EMD property—it never bought another Alco new. However, the Maria failures, having occurred in the remote regions of northern Maine, were hardly noticed by other railroads and probably had little negative impact on Alco commercially.

By this time, the three Black Marias had been superseded by the FA1 cab units and FB1 boosters. The Marias were not easily adaptable to the features of the subsequent production units, and maintaining parts and technical support for three flawed oddballs would have been an ongoing burden. So, they were returned to Schenectady for removal of their engines and electrical rotating equipment. The empty carbodies, only slightly more than two years old, were scrapped in Ohio during fall 1947. ■

More on our Web site

Read about author Preston Cook's long, sometimes clandestine association with the mysterious Black Marias at www.ClassicTrainsMag.com

Workin' on the Railroad



KCS, 1978: Eve of the computer age

Think of the reach of your arms, and compare that to the expanse of the display in front of Kansas City Southern dispatcher Tony McGuire (left photo) as he worked in fall 1978 directing—by Centralized Traffic Control—all train movements on the 560 mainline miles between Kansas City and Shreveport, La., the railroad's operating hub. Note also the size of the trainsheet in front of him. Today, his counterparts have all necessary information right in front of them, on computer screens, and KCS's K.C.-Shreveport main is divided between two dispatchers. (On some roads, computers have enabled dispatchers to control more territory.) Then shift your attention to the KCS station at Ashdown, Ark. (below), where agent Floyd W. Garcia, in the same year, worked at a terminal linked to a KCS mainframe miles away. Probably he was doing waybill work, or printing crew bulletins. Computers condensed the playing field in front of you, and they both eliminated and added work (and not just on the railroad!). But they don't do everything. Note the manual typewriter in the foreground (below), which we bet was still being used daily for some duties in the Ashdown depot.



Two photos: Fred W. Frailey

Read Fred Frailey's report on today's KCS in the September 2009 issue of TRAINS magazine.

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The Way It Was

Remembering the C&NW in Madison

A boy from a Milwaukee Road family was drawn to the Wisconsin capital's "other" big road



Four photos, Frank Rogers

Running left-handed per C&NW practice, E-class Pacific 1634 skirts Lake Monona as she departs Madison with the evening local to Chicago.

Back in the days when there were enough railroad companies to make train-watching really interesting, Madison, Wis., was served by three: the Milwaukee Road, the Chicago & North Western, and the Illinois Central. The Milwaukee was the first to arrive, in 1854, on its way from its namesake city to the Mississippi River, with the none-too-imaginative name of Milwaukee & Mississippi. Ultimately, the name became Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific, and the road had lines into the Wisconsin state capital from four directions.

The Illinois Central went by that name from the time of its 1888 entry into Madison. However, the company that began construction on what would become IC's Freeport (Ill.)-Madison branch was called the Chicago, Freeport & St. Paul. IC was a vast, busy railroad, but, with just the one line into town, kept a low profile in Madison.

Madison's third railroad, the Chicago & North Western, reached the city in 1864. The name sounds pretty grandiose, and the C&NW was, as railroads went in their heyday. Here was the railroad that (until October 1955) brought Union Pacific's transcontinental streamliners to and from Chicago. Here was the road that had the 400's. Here was

the other big-time road in Madison.

The term "other" was quite meaningful to me at that time—the 1930's and '40's—when steam engines ruled the rails and passenger and freight schedules were frequent enough to forestall any boredom for a teenage railfan like me. From my perspective, the Milwaukee Road was sort of like "home," since my dad and grandfather were both engineers on its Madison Division. I heard all about goings-on up and down the pike from them, as they discussed various runs, engines, crews—both current and from memory. On the other hand, there was the North Western.

The C&NW was "different." Its engines looked different. Its passenger cars were painted dark green or a bright yellow—unlike the Milwaukee's orange and maroon. And occasionally one could see in North Western trains the cars from other roads, like the maroon of the Soo Line and—talk about exotic—the Canadian Pacific! In double-track territory, the North Western used the left track instead of the right.

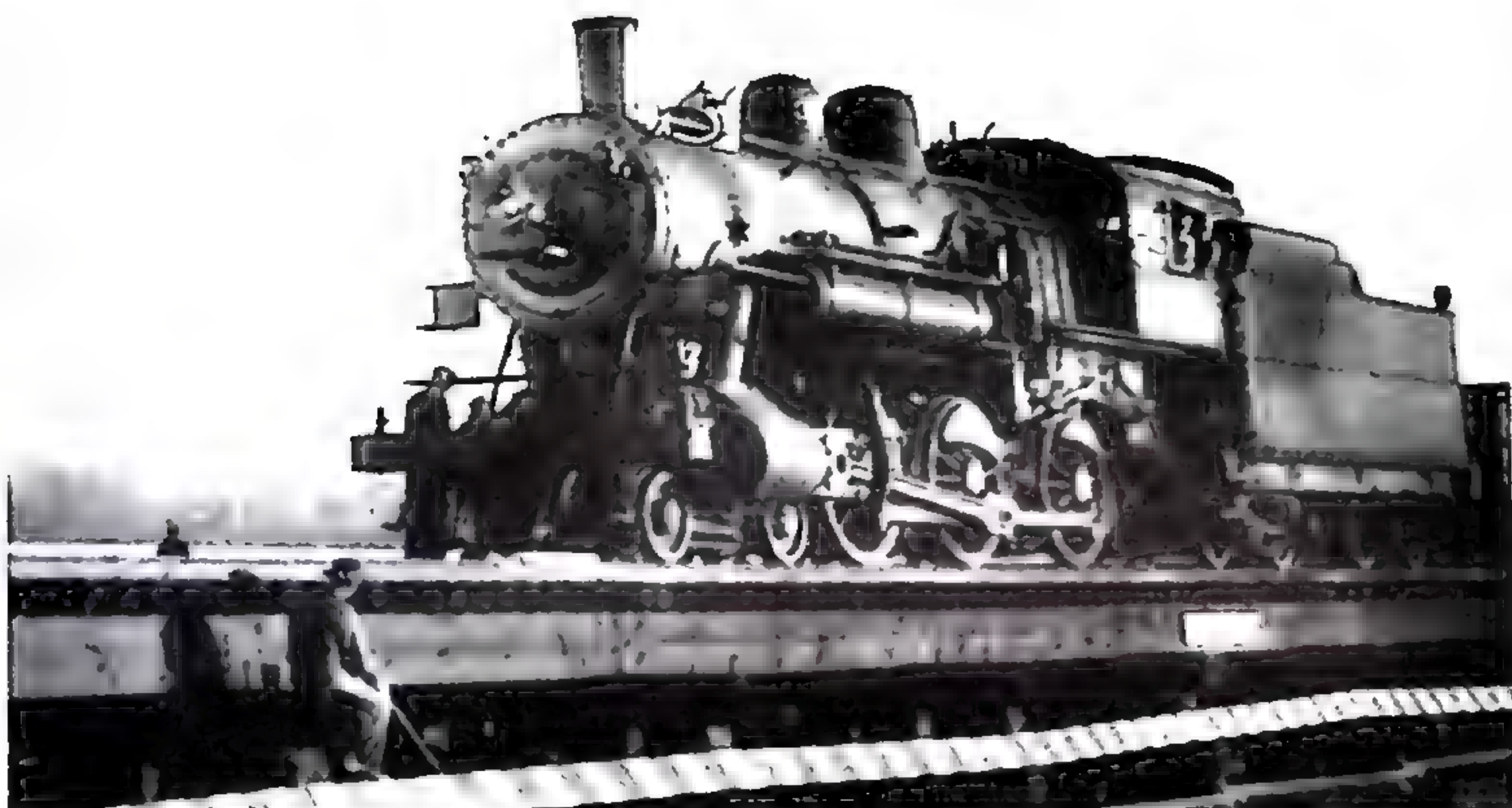
The C&NW had an imposing depot on the near east side, with not only two main tracks but two or three stubs for trains originating or terminating at Madison. Lines went north through Baraboo, Elroy, etc.; south to Janesville,

Beloit, and Chicago; and east to Milwaukee. In addition, there was the "Ridge Runner" branch to southwestern Wisconsin towns such as Lancaster and Fennimore.

Madison's two big roads—Milwaukee and C&NW—shared an unusual crossing, right in the middle of Brittingham Bay, a large inlet on the west end of Lake Monona, one of the city's "Four Lakes." Other essays on this crossing have called it either "Lake Junction" or, more correctly, Tower MX.

I spent a lot of time watching trains come over that crossing. Some of the most memorable ran on the North Western, carrying names like the *Mountaineer*, *Duluth-Superior Limited*, *Viking*, and *Soo Dominion*. There were also local passenger trains, long and short freights, and gas-electric cars. There were several versions of E-class Pacifics, from the lighter ones to the big E-2's, some of which had been modified in 1935 to pull the first editions of the 400 between Chicago and the Twin Cities. J-class Mikes hauled the freights, except for those on the Ridge Runner line, which R-class Ten-Wheelers handled.

Nowadays, the Chicago & North Western Railway is no more. Its lines east, south, and west from Madison are abandoned, with only stubs remaining



R-1 Ten-Wheeler 345 eases across Brittingham Bay with a train from the Ridge Runner line.



Having completed two-thirds of its Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison-Chicago run, the *Capitol 400* stands at C&NW's Madison station.



E-2 Pacific 2903, a veteran of the 1935 *400*, nears Madison with the Chicago-Vancouver, B.C., *Mountaineer*, a C&NW-Soo-CPR train.

in the city. The line north, once an important, double-track artery, has been truncated at Reedsburg, 52 miles out. Regional road Wisconsin & Southern operates all these segments, which, of course, have been freight-only for decades. The imposing depot on Blair Street has been purchased by the local power company, and hardly bears any resemblance to the bustling railroad station that it once was, when it hosted arrivals and departures of local passenger runs and name trains.

But I can still hear, as I think back over the years, the approach, still miles away, of the *Duluth-Superior Limited*, due in Madison around 10:00 p.m., as it whistled for the first grade crossing after coming through the cut south of town, the rock walls seeming to amplify the engineer's announcement. Next would come the whistles for another grade crossing, Lakeside Street, and then the rattle of the wheels as the train crossed the Milwaukee in the middle of the bay.—Frank Rogers

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Beyond the training program

An N&W management trainee gets his wish: railroading for real

It happened three decades ago, but I still fresh are my memories of following the ghosts of 2-8-4 Berkshires and Bluebird PA's on the former Nickel Plate Road Buffalo-Chicago main line. It was never planned to happen that way, but thanks to the eccentricities of U.S. railroad labor laws, I spent my summer of 1978 like no other.

July started for me as a Norfolk & Western Railway management trainee performing construction inspection on a coal-mine branch being built in far western Virginia. Although a long way from my native upper Michigan, I was employing my new civil engineering degree toward expected ends. However, on July 10, the first topic of discussion when my three fellow inspectors picked me up in Richlands for our carpool over the mountain to Vansant was that back in Bluefield, W.Va., the company's clerks had gone out on strike. Interesting, we thought, but not relevant to our work. The strike would be over within a week, as they all were.

One week slipped into two, and then three. The occasional train passing through Richlands on the Clinch Valley District was capped by a red flag instead of a caboose, but otherwise the strike showed little to me. I knew that people from the Roanoke engineering department were now scattered between Kan-

sas City and Norfolk doing activities definitely not in their job descriptions, but our construction continued unaffected. I started to feel I was missing the "show." Finally, I got the call. Roanoke had decided that my none-too-strenuous inspection job did not require a 23-year-old in good health. I was told to fly to Buffalo the next day, August 7.

Acquired by N&W in its 1964 absorption of the NKP, Buffalo's Bison Yard was then a joint operation between N&W and Conrail, with an N&W superintendent and Conrail maintenance responsibility. The mostly unionized Conrail maintenance force would not cross the N&W picket lines. To compensate, the N&W had earlier shipped up from Roanoke a former division engineer named Harry, who in turn had hired a small crew from a local contractor. I was to be Harry's assistant.

Maintenance at Bison in the strike context actually meant fixing the track from the previous day's mishaps. The quickly trained N&W management crews switching the yard worked safely, but overturned rails and sprung switches were still common. Soon, swinging a spike maul came naturally to me. The upstate New York summer weather was idyllic and life wasn't bad. But the folks back in Roanoke were not happy with N&W having to do Conrail's work, so

one morning, with the strike approaching its 60th day, a group of Conrail management trainees materialized at Bison. None of them seemed overjoyed with becoming part of a glorified section gang, but no matter; I was out of there.

My new assignment was at Bellevue, Ohio, the hump-yard heart of N&W's ex-Nickel Plate lines. Now I was one of those management yard crews, learning Bellevue's veins. *Two cars, one car, that'll do*—the new work came easily, but I still felt I was missing out as I saw former co-workers leaving town on big black diesels. The yard jobs had somewhat regular hours, but I wanted the high iron. Soon my wishes hit the right ears and I found myself the "conductor" on freight BC-1 heading for Chicago one morning.

My engineer, Lanny, was a mechanical department manager who knew how to handle our SD40-GP9-SD35 consist, so all I mostly had to do was enjoy the view. On reaching East Wayne Yard near Fort Wayne, Lanny told me to grab our orders. I looked out and saw someone standing next to the track with a hoop. I had never even seen it done before, but I reached out and snared them like an old-time boomer. I was in the big show at last.

Our return trip on CB-12 was more eventful. In Hammond, Ind., we went into emergency and Lanny told me to go back and take a look. I didn't have a radio and not much of an idea of how to fix whatever I might find, but off I trudged. Luckily it was daylight. As I



Craig Willett

hiked back, I passed several crossings where motorists were becoming agitated. Finally at the rear car, a mile from the engines, I came across something even I should be able to manage: separated air hoses. I closed the angle cock at the rear of the next car forward and then tried to couple the hoses. No go—with the slack stretched I could not get them to mate. Then, as I was trying again, I heard the train start moving. Not wanting to be left in Hammond, I grabbed onto the last car and wondered what the heck Lanny was doing. A few miles later we stopped and I trekked up to the engines. Lanny explained that he

I reached out and snared the orders like an old-time boomer. I was in the big show at last.

had decided to move out as soon as the air pressure came up to get away from the crossings, expecting that I would at least be smart enough to hop on. We soon met a westbound whose crew fixed us up to continue to Bellevue.

The rest of my trips were east of Bellevue, mostly with Wes, a safety department manager who had once been a real engineer and road foreman and who was full of Nickel Plate stories. My workplace became the Lake Erie Division's rolling countryside with glimpses of its namesake lake, Cleveland with its parallel rapid-transit line,

suburban Lakewood with its 27 grade crossings, and Erie with its street-running. Trips to Buffalo and turns to places like Lorain, Cleveland, and Conneaut showed that the region's heavy industries had not yet fully rusted away. On one trip while waiting for a meet, my engineer and I might have even contributed to a new generation of railfans, based on the excited reaction of a young boy as we climbed off the engine and walked to a nearby Dairy Queen.

Toward the end of September, the weather began turning frosty and even I started longing for normalcy, especially for regular sleep hours. Legal and political maneuvering finally resulted in a congressionally imposed end to the strike on September 30. Around 11 p.m. on the 29th, Wes and I found ourselves waiting an unusually long time for no apparent reason to get a clear signal from Conrail at Buffalo Junction before heading west. By the time we got to Bellevue, it was daylight and the union crews were back to work, and there was a bus waiting to take me to the Cleveland airport.

The Norfolk & Western later commissioned a book describing what its people did and the productivity gains it realized during the strike. Ironically, a strike over clerical staffing disagreements ended up helping to prove that railroads could operate overall with many fewer people. My continuing railroad career is still intrinsically interesting, but nothing has yet matched the summer of '78.—Robert Siik

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E. B. Holton

Time portal in Elizabeth, N.J.

In our fascination with the great trains and locomotives of the past, there's a tendency to think of them as isolated objects, disconnected from their environment. Photos from the era, particularly the three-quarter "wedge" shot, reinforce this outlook. Scenic views in mountain passes are prized for their depiction of railroads in majestic natural surroundings, but images of trains in cities—where they were glimpsed by millions of people each day—are relatively rare. This delightful exception to the rule, apparently from before World War II, shows Broad Street in Elizabeth, N.J., as framed by an arch supporting the Pennsylvania's New York main line. In the mist beyond the Public Service bus, above the trackless-trolley wires, is a Reading 4-6-2 on the Jersey Central main.

Win a few, lose a few

A slick UP freight conductor meets his match in a watermelon patch

Within any group, whether depicted in a comic strip like *Beetle Bailey* or a television sit-com like *M*A*S*H*, there seems to be a sampling of stereotypical characters. Railroads are certainly well infiltrated with these types, particularly the smooth-talking know-it-all. Take, for instance, the character Killer in the *Bailey* comic strip: a self-proclaimed "ladies' man" with a clever answer for any situation and a talent for worming his way out of any problem. Today, I believe I would describe the type as *slick*.

In the early 1950's on Union Pacific's Idaho Division, where I worked as a locomotive fireman, there was a freight conductor I'll call Ernie (I'll avoid his real name), who was just such a person. He always had a solution for whatever ailed you. If you'd recently purchased something, he could always have bought it cheaper and gotten a better deal. You know the type.

Our section of the railroad was named the Third Subdivision. It ran from my home in Glens Ferry, Idaho,

165 miles west to Huntington, Ore., our home-away-from-home just across the Snake River from Idaho.

In those days, a lot of locally grown produce was shipped by rail to eastern markets. This was especially true during the fall harvest when solid trains of yellow Pacific Fruit Express refrigerator cars could be seen. It was not unusual for our crews to be called out of Huntington for a caboose hop to run 23 miles east to Weiser (pronounced "weezer"), Idaho, and pick up as many as 40 loaded reefers. We then would continue on down the line to other towns and pick up more loads to take to Nampa, where PFE had a large icing facility to service the loaded reefers before they were dispatched farther east.

One of the big problems with picking up cars at Weiser was that it was necessary to block a major highway crossing during the switching operations. This often brought complaints from the local populous, but no official action. That is, until the night that the local constable had had enough and decided to issue a

citation for the blockage. He boarded the caboose, where he presented the ticket with the fine of, I believe, \$20 to the conductor—Ernie.

Ernie immediately grasped the situation and informed the officer that he had no money. The officer, having heard this song before, threatened to take Ernie to jail if he couldn't pay the fine. To this, Ernie countered that he was responsible for over a million dollars worth of perishable produce, as he held the pack of shipping invoices in front of the officer. He stated that he would have to assign the responsibility to the constable, who would be held accountable for any loss.

With full dramatics, Ernie explained how time-sensitive and easily damaged perishable goods were, along with the huge sums of money that could be lost as a result. Ernie then attempted to surrender the waybills to the country-bumpkin officer, who backed away from them as if they were on fire. The constable departed from the caboose with a rather anemic demand to get the crossing cleared quickly. Chalk another victory to our melodramatic hero, who afterwards spared no words in describing his magnificent conquest to all who would listen or couldn't escape.

Now, fast forward a year or so to the height of watermelon season and a rural siding named Crystal. On this 'single-track line, it was a favorite siding for meets between trains. It had no road crossings to deal with and was level and easy to enter and depart. One warm summer evening, an eastbound freight—with Ernie as conductor—pulled into the siding with the prospect of a considerable wait because of heavy superior westbound traffic.

Ernie surveyed the adjacent farm and noted a large watermelon patch nearby. It didn't take long for the rear-end crew to develop a melon appetite. Ernie, being the hero type, appointed himself as the official procurer and proceeded into the patch to pluck a ripe melon. This might have worked quite well in the absence of greed. But greed did exist.

Ernie decided to get into the watermelon supply business for the whole crew and then some. On about the third or fourth trip between the caboose and the melon patch, Ernie was suddenly faced with a shotgun-wielding farmer who saw no humor in the watermelon theft operation. Ernie was given the choice of purchasing his chosen melons—at a greatly inflated price—or following the farmer to his home where he would face arrest. Worse yet, he'd be turned in to the railroad, which probably would fire him. This was one Ernie couldn't talk his way around, so he paid

The cop threatened to take Ernie to jail if he couldn't pay the fine for blocking the crossing.

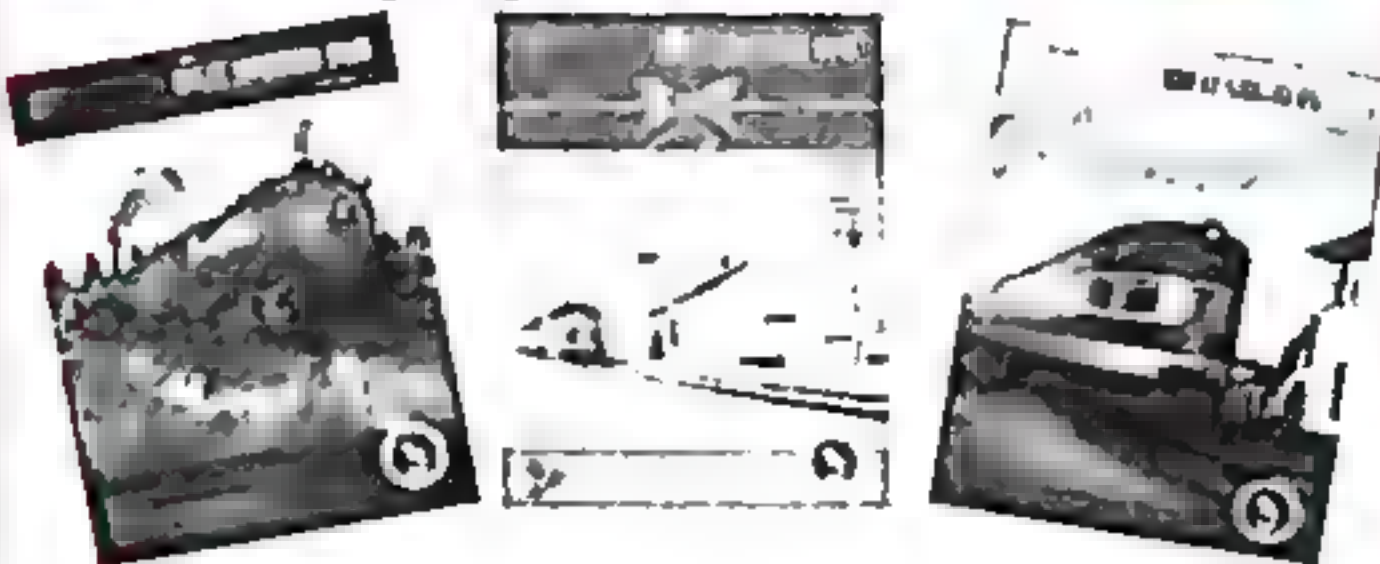
the farmer for the watermelons.

During the following days there was very little mention of the melon incident. But, since rail yards and railroaders have never been known to hold secrets well, the news did get out, along with a lot of chiding for Ernie, who never admitted what he'd had to pay for the melons. Needless to say, it was undoubtedly a substantial amount.

Mark this one in the loss column for old Ernie. As the title says: Win a few, lose a few.—*Les Clark*

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The time I got to run 'my unit'

A chance ride on Illinois Central's first SD40 leading a coal train east

I have always had a thing for "class units," that is, the first in a series, and "my engine" is Illinois Central 6000, an SD40 delivered in late 1967 in the then-new orange and white color scheme. I have a custom-painted HO scale model of it, weathered in that livery. Best of all, during my short stint as a railroader, I got to run it!

In October 1980, when I was on my Iowa Division road trip just prior to being qualified as a train dispatcher for the Illinois Central Gulf, I was returning home one cool Friday night. On the segment from Waterloo, Iowa, to Wallace Yard at Freeport, Ill., I was riding a unit coal train which had the 6000 as lead unit, with two former Gulf, Mobile & Ohio "Big Red" SD40's and an IC SD40A behind.

It was a fun trip. The regular engineer had laid off, so up front were just the fireman (who was a qualified engineer), the head brakeman, and me. My friend and fellow rail historian Bob Schramm was dispatching, so I called

him from the Waterloo yard office prior to departing and told him to "give us a good move." Well, we never stopped for any of our meets, and we had a lot of them! The crew was impressed.

A cool evening? When we left Waterloo, at dusk, our headlight even picked up some very light snowflakes. It seemed like we met a train at almost every siding between Waterloo and Dubuque; only the sidings at Independence and Farley were too small for meets. At Manchester, we met two trains. The turnaround job up the branch from Cedar Rapids was just arriving, and a westbound grain empty, with a U33C leading, was in the siding. At Dyersville, we did have to creep along a bit until a late-running CC-1 cleared the main.

Coming down the hill into Dubuque, in the Mississippi River valley, the head brakeman heated some homemade meatloaf on the 6000's engine manifold, so we had warm sandwiches coming into town. His mother had made it and wrapped it in foil; it tasted great.

Over on the Illinois side, just after we passed East Cabin in East Dubuque, the engineer turned to me and said, "It's your turn to run 'em." I took his seat and throttled up, and we made 45 mph all the way down along the river on the trackage shared with the Burlington Northern. The four SD40's were rolling with our 101 cars. At Portage I had to slow down to 10 mph to negotiate the crossovers, then again we pulled as we went uphill to Galena, where I had to brake for a 10-mph curve.

Once we passed the Galena depot, I pulled back to the Run 8 notch for a run at the hill. We got up to around 35 mph and then started into the grade—not far from the IC here is Charles Mound, the highest point in the entire state of Illinois. By the time we got to the town of Scales Mound, we were down to about 8 mph. Shortly after we topped the grade there, the engineer took over again and ran on into Wallace Yard on the west side of Freeport.

I haven't had all that many cab rides, official or otherwise, but this one was my most memorable. I have a lot of fond memories of that October night 29 years ago, but best of all, "my unit" is a big part of it.—R. B. "Randy" Olson



J. David Ingles

On June 15, 1974—six years before author Olson's ride on her—ICG SD40 6000 pulls into Markham Yard at Homewood, Ill., with GP40 3011.



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Whose cab ride is this?

A little boy's love of trains is tested on an Alco road-switcher

Youth is wasted on young people, so the saying goes. Kids don't have the ... well ... maturity to know what's special in their world. Watch the crowds at Disneyland. It's the adults who are agog at the wonders of the place; the kids look blasé. Or frightened. Which reminds me of my first locomotive cab ride.

I couldn't have been more than five years old, so this took place in the late 1950's. By then my fascination with trains was already conspicuous, so when my mom, dad, younger brother, and I went into Manhattan, we often took a train from our home in New Jersey to Hoboken on either the Lackawanna's Boonton Line or the Erie's Main Line (Erie began using DL&W's Hoboken Terminal in 1956). After an arriving

train was unloaded at Hoboken, the road power—one of those smoky Alco road-switchers ubiquitous on both the DL&W and the Erie—would uncouple from its consist with a startling *bang!* as the air hoses separated, and would pull ahead the short distance to the bumping post. A yard engine would then haul the string of Erie Stillwells or Lackawanna "Wyatt Earp" cars out of the trainshed.

On this occasion, as we detrained at Hoboken, I noticed my dad was having a conspiratorial conversation with the conductor. Dad then took me by the hand, led me to the engine, and urged me to climb the steps into the cab; he followed behind. This should have been a thrill! But I was a timid little fellow, so instead I felt apprehensive. I wasn't

convinced it was all right to be doing this. The ascent was daunting; the steps were too far apart for my little legs. I was not confident I had the strength to climb all the way up, and began to worry how I'd get back down. The engineer loomed big and intimidating; his engine rumbled and hissed ominously.

By the time I entered the cab, I was actually in tears. Adding to the absurdity of the moment, my brother, down on the platform with Mom, was crying too, not because he was envying my opportunity, but because he was afraid Dad and I were about to ride away and abandon him and Mom. When the air hoses parted—*bang!*—we both became completely hysterical. While my brother's worst fears were apparently coming true, I was certain we were going to crash into the bumping post!

If my dad had arranged this ride to give me a memorable experience, he certainly succeeded. I can only wonder what the engine crew made of all the histrionics. At least Dad wasn't panicked. He was observantly absorbed in the operation of the engine, almost like the archetypal "Pop" playing with a train set he bought ostensibly for his son. Say ... you don't suppose my dad arranged for me to get on the engine so he could get a cab ride ... ?

I survived that first short locomotive ride with my love of trains intact. And in much later years I have had several cab rides of greater length, accepted with greater courage and grace. But though it may have been wasted on me, I do not in the least begrudge my dad's first cab ride.—Curtis L. Katz



Richard H. Young

Erie RS2 904 clatters into Lackawanna's Hoboken Terminal with a Main Line local in 1956.

Close encounters of the 4-6-4 kind

The Hudson types of four railroads left lasting impressions on a steam fan

While growing up in Cleveland and Buffalo after World War II, a close encounter with a Hudson-type locomotive was just a train ride away. My first memory was as a four-year-old. My family had taken the New York Central to Chicago, and as we walked forward at La Salle Street Station, I was amazed that the locomotive's tender—one of the new high-capacity PT-class "centipede"

types—was as large as the locomotive itself. I asked the fireman what kind of engine it was. He responded, "Why, son, this is a Hudson!" I never forgot the name, and as I counted the wheels, I learned that a Hudson was a 4-6-4.

In spring 1948, my mom and I were taking the Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo from Buffalo to Toronto, and my dad was seeing us off at Buffalo's Black Rock

Station. Dad asked the station agent if the train would run on time, and he told us, "Of course—she's got one of those new Hudsons." TH&B's two Hudsons may have been new to that road, but they were in reality 18-year-old J-1e's purchased from the NYC. The agent's prediction was accurate—the train arrived with a Hudson. On departing Fort Erie on the Canadian side, we left town like a rocket and were soon at track speed. The rapid pace continued all the way to Toronto. Canadian Pacific crews handled the Hamilton-Toronto segment, but the power ran through.

The CP man in the cab seemed to be enjoying himself as we fairly flew to Toronto. We arrived right on the money.

Until 1953, Hudsons were regular visitors in Buffalo, and I enjoyed several more trips behind them. However, when the NYC dieselized Buffalo, the wheel arrangement had left the area for good—or so I thought. Four years later, during a visit to the Nickel Plate roundhouse, I discovered the 175. She was the protection power for NKP's two passenger trains in Buffalo. During the summer of 1957, I hung out at the Nickel Plate roundhouse and even saw her under steam several times, but I never had the chance to ride behind her. That would change on May 18, 1958. The Buffalo Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society sponsored



Frank Clodfelter collection

"One of those new Hudsons": Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo bought 18-year-old J-1e 501 and sister 502 from the Central in 1948.

an excursion to Cleveland and back with the 175. The train turned out to be a whopper: 22 cars. Indeed, it was way beyond the capability of the locomotive, NKP's being among the lightest of all 4-6-4's ever built. Instead of a typically fast ride behind a Hudson, top speed was only about 50 mph and, embarrassingly, we were being passed by diesel-powered freights on the parallel NYC.

The trip ran very late, and on the return leg, a Berkshire replaced the 175 at Conneaut.

Later that year, after the NKP dieselized, I would discover yet more Hudsons in Canada. Both the CPR and Canadian National still had active steam engines, and the NRHS chapter began to focus on trips in Canada. The CN trips all ran with Northerns, but the CP was another story.

We rode behind Mikados, Ten-Wheelers, Pacifics, and, you guessed it, Hudsons. One of these was the 2839, which later experienced a renaissance when it joined the Southern Railway excursion fleet in 1979. The last Hudson trip before the preservation era was behind the 2857 in May 1960—just weeks after the official end of Canadian Pacific steam.—Neil Carlson ■

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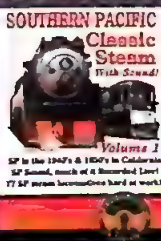


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Streetcars in the Motor City

For the first half century or so, street railway development in Detroit followed the pattern found in many other cities: horsecars in 1863, electrification in the early 1890's, and the merger of three companies into a single citywide outfit, Detroit United Railways, in 1900. Things took an unconventional turn in 1920 when, after years of feuding with DUR, the city government broke ground on its own competing streetcar system; the lines of the "Municipal Operation," as it was known, totalled 52 miles by

the end of 1921. Perhaps envisioning what the Motor City's burgeoning ranks of rubber-tired products would do to the economics of urban transit, DUR threw in the towel and sold its facilities and cars used within the city limits to the municipality. The city's Department of Street Railways began operating the former DUR lines on May 15, 1922, making Detroit America's first large city to own and operate its mass transit system, an arrangement that decades later would become universal. DSR



William C. Janssen photo; Krambles-Peterson Archive

got off to a shaky start: The former DUR tracks, overhead, and rolling stock were in poor condition, and the 250 four-wheel Birney cars acquired by the Municipal Operation were proving unsatisfactory. Peter Witt cars—731 of them, delivered during 1922–30—became the backbone of the DSR fleet, lasting nearly to the end of rail operations, which occurred on April 8, 1956. DSR's 186 PCC cars of 1945–49 handled the final two years of service. Less than a year before the end,

PCC's 157 and 145 cross paths on April 17, 1955, at Cadillac Square in downtown Detroit. Behind car 145 is the Majestic Building, an early skyscraper; down Michigan Avenue, beyond the PEOPLES sign, is the Book Cadillac Hotel; and in the distance can be seen the light towers of Briggs Stadium, home to the American League Tigers.

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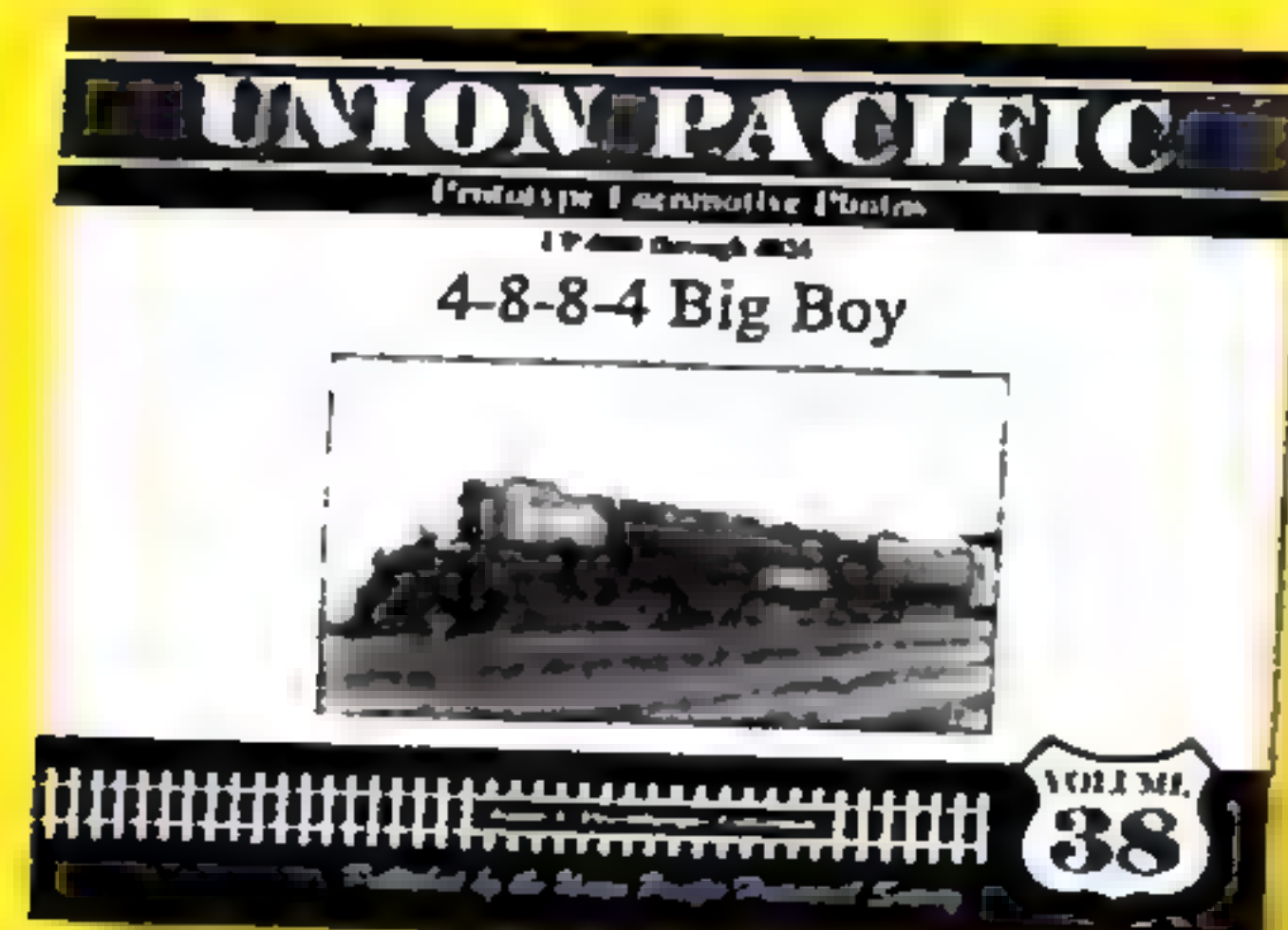
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Ready Track

First Out

One would expect that a handsome, comprehensive book about the Sacramento Northern—the beloved interurban that sprawled from San Francisco 185 miles north to Chico, Calif., plus several branches—would have appeared years ago. That would have been the case had it not been for the untimely death of its author, California traction authority Harre Demoro, in 1993, shortly after he completed the manuscript. Happily, Signature Press has brought Demoro's work to fruition, and it's a marvelous job. Illustrated with 471 black-and-white photos plus 20 maps and drawings, it traces SN from its origins in 1906 through its expansion, dieselization, and gradual absorption by parent Western Pacific. Steeple-cab freight motors, the ferry *Ramon*, streetcars, Delta trestles, the Bay Bridge, and all the other SN hallmarks are found in this, the definitive work on its subject.—Robert S. McGonigal

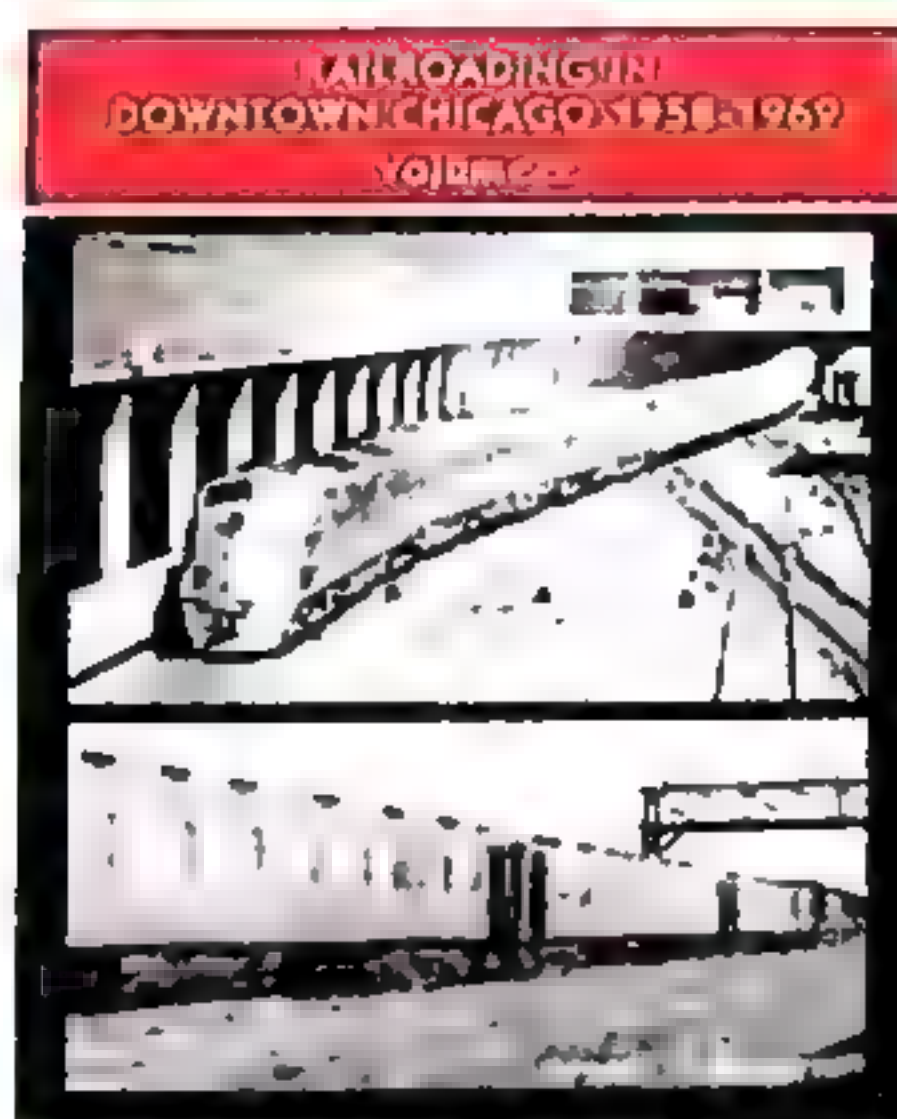
Sacramento Northern

Harre W. Demoro



Sacramento Northern, by Harre W. Demoro. Signature Press, 11508 Green Rd., Wilton, CA 95693; 800-305-7942; www.signaturepress.com; 8½ x 11 in., hardbound; 352 pages; \$70.

Other Books



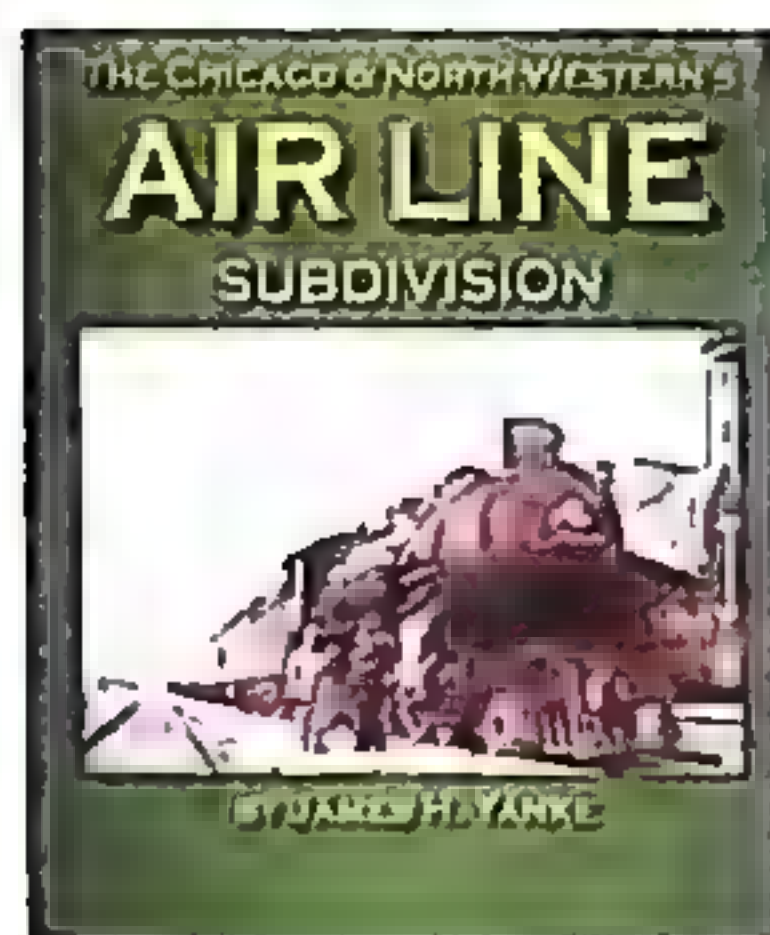
The decade before Amtrak is featured in this album of (mainly) passenger action in Chicago. Author Olmsted, one of the era's finest black-and-white photographers, selected more than 60 images of trains in and around Chicago's several passenger terminals. Views include the trains themselves as well as surrounding structures, scenes, vehicles, and other details, with many shots of railroaders at work. Photo captions are the only text; they provide background on equipment, operations, locations, and historical information. Trains of the CB&Q, Santa Fe, Illinois Central, Pennsy, and several other railroads are included. Photo reproduction is excellent.—Jeff Wilson

Railroading in Downtown Chicago, 1958-1969, Vol. 2, by Robert P. Olmsted. The Railroad Press, P.O. Box 444, Hanover, PA 17331; www.alco628.com; 8½ x 11 in.; 48 pages; softcover; \$18.95.

First published in 1991, this is a great book about a great engine, the N&W A-class 2-6-6-4, 43 of which were built for fast-freight work between 1936 and 1950. N&W's commitment to coal-fired steam power implied by that latter year was matched by its expertise in designing and building steam locomotives, and the A is widely regarded as the best of a great family of engines. Profusely illustrated (20 color and 200 black-and-white photos, all nicely reproduced) and highly readable (author King is a gifted writer), this work is a model study of a single locomotive class. New features in this revised edition include sections on the A's tenders and N&W's tests of a Pennsy Q2 4-4-6-4.—R.S.M.

The A: Norfolk & Western's Mercedes of Steam, by Ed King. Norfolk & Western Historical Society, Inc., Roanoke, Va.; 540-342-0575, www.nwhs.org; 8½ x 11 in.; hardbound; 212 pages; \$64.95





Retired C&NW conductor Jim Yanke draws on his own experiences and dips into many historical sources in this extensive look at his road's Air Line Subdivision from Milwaukee to Fond du Lac, Wis. Several maps—including some original C&NW and state maps as well as many new ones created for the book—make it easy to follow the route. Nearly 300 black-and-white photos depict the line from the late 1800's through its sale to Fox River Valley Railroad in 1988. The photos cover the line well, showing depots, industries, bridges, and other details, along with the trains themselves. Most chapters are divided by location, while others cover accidents, special operations, and locomotives and trains.—*J.W.*

The Chicago & North Western's Air Line Subdivision, by James H. Yanke. Chicago & North Western Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Ethel, MO 64631; www.cnwhs.org; 8½ x 11 in.; 256 pages; hardcover; \$59.95.

This exhaustive work covers one of the Lake Superior region's first iron ore railroads. Author Gaertner starts with the predecessor railroads of the 1850's that became the DSS&A in 1887. He takes a division-by-division look at the road's construction and traffic evolution, following its Duluth, Minn.—Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., route. DSS&A had complex relationships with Canadian Pacific, which controlled it, and Soo Line, also controlled by CP. Both are well covered, as is the line's Depression-era bankruptcy, reorganization, and 1961 merger with the Soo. More than 125 black-and-white photos and numerous maps and detailed drawings of towns and other features are included. Appendices include all-time steam and diesel locomotive rosters (with dispositions), a list of stations with services available at each, and charts showing operating revenues by year.—*J.W.*

The Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railway, by John Gaertner. Indiana University Press, 601 N. Morton St., Bloomington, IN 47404; www.iupress.indiana.edu; 7 x 10 in.; 350 pages; hardcover, \$49.95.



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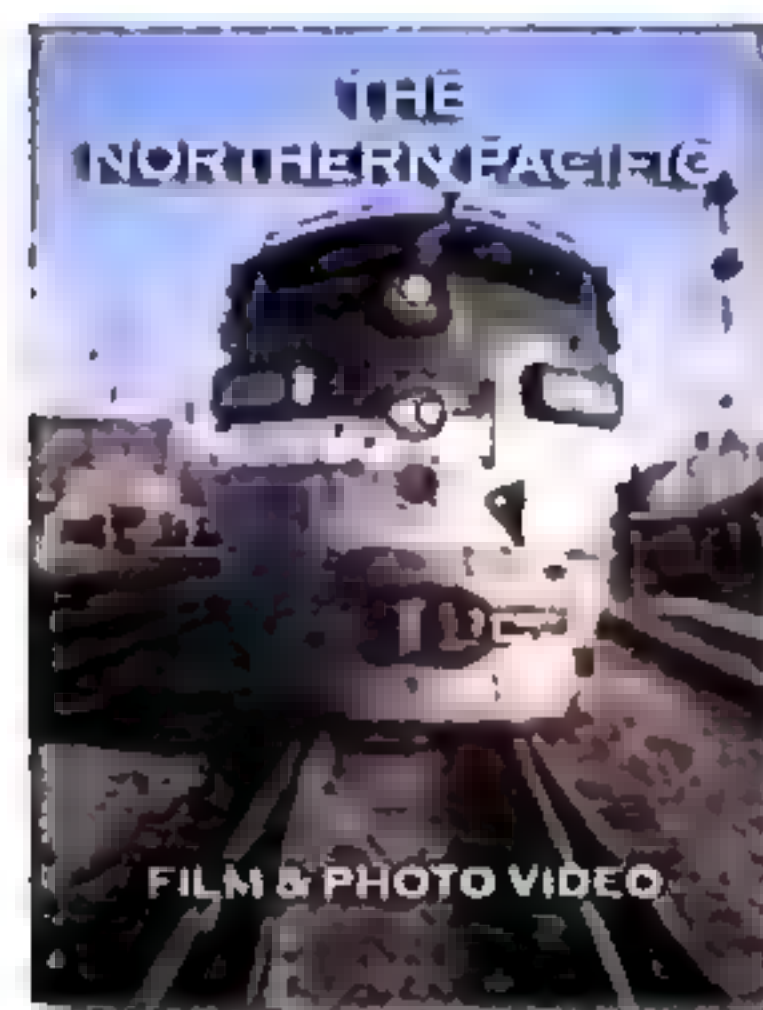
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Chicago Streetcar Memories, An Oral History Documentary: The Director's Cut. Chicago Transport Memories LLC, 1751 W. Howard, Unit D-115, Chicago, IL 60626; 313-861-0009; www.chicago-transport-memories.com; 130 minutes; \$29.95.



This combination DVD video and CD-ROM provides an excellent study of the Northern Pacific. The DVD uses a combination of more than 1,000 still photos and 22 minutes of classic film footage to give viewers a tour of the NP from the Twin Cities to the Pacific Northwest. Images include trains, depots, locomotives, rolling stock, bridges, and scenes. Images are both black-and-white and color, ranging from the early 1900's into the Burlington Northern era. Narration and on-screen maps explain key locations and features. The CD-ROM includes digital images of many of the photos from the DVD, along with PDF files of various NP tourist guides, timetables, an annual report, and other publications.—*J.W.*

The Northern Pacific. PrairieWorks, 6300 Sequoia Circle, Eden Prairie, MN 55346; 952-937-1088; www.prairie-works.com; DVD/CD-ROM; 104 mins.; \$29.95

What became of Pittsburgh's short lines?

A few survive, but steel-plant closures in the 1980's decimated their ranks



Jerry Pinkepank; J. David Ingles collection

Pittsburgh in 1962 was no longer the smoke-choked city it had been when steam ruled the railroads, but it still was full of busy, active mills, all railroad-served. So my visit with Jerry Pinkepank and the late Hank Goerke [pages 60-71] occurred during a pleasant time window, before the accelerated decline of the nation's steel industry set in. Almost a half-century hence, only a few reminders of those 20-some short lines of 1962 remain. Here's a review of what became of all those roads, including the city's Class 1's, thanks to Pittsburgh rail historian Lee Gregory.

Aliquippa & Southern: Shrank drastically when LTV Steel (successor to J&L Steel) closed most of the Aliquippa Works in 1985; since 2002, it has been part of Ohio Central System (now owned by Genesee & Wyoming), operated as the Aliquippa & Ohio River.

Baltimore & Ohio: Chesapeake & Ohio acquired control in 1962 and merged it in 1987; lines exist as part of CSX, plus short lines Allegheny Valley Railroad (owned by Carload Express, Inc.) and G&W's Buffalo & Pittsburgh.

Bessemer & Lake Erie: Extant, owned by Canadian National since 2002, when CN also bought Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range from U.S. Steel.

McKeesport Connecting: Extant, U.S. Steel-owned; the one small remnant is operated by one crew with a leased Union SW1500. McKC may sus-

pend operations owing to the temporary closure of its only customer, a pipe mill that operates a portion of the former USS McKeesport Works.

Monessen Southwestern: Ceased operations following its plant closure in 1986. The coke plant reopened in 1988, and now is operated by Arcelor Mittal Steel and served by CSX (ex-P&LE) and the new (1990) regional Wheeling & Lake Erie (via former MSW track).

Monongahela: P&LE sold its one-third ownership to Conrail in 1989, and CSX did so in 1990. CR absorbed it in '92; it survives as part of Norfolk Southern. CSX has extensive trackage rights as part of the 1999 Conrail split.

Monongahela Connecting: One industrial spur remains on the north side of the Monongahela River, serving a remnant of the closed LTV Steel plant. Mon Con is owned and operated by AVR; its twin Mon River bridges are in highway and bike/pedestrian use.

Montour: A slow decline precipitated by closure of on-line coal mines accelerated in the early 1970's, and portions were abandoned through the '70's until final closure in 1984. Much of the route now is a recreational trail.

Pennsylvania: Merged with NYC as Penn Central in 1968, to Conrail in 1976; Pittsburgh-area lines now mostly NS, except the severely truncated Panhandle Division (now mostly a trail) and the Chartiers Secondary, both run

Union 476 in 1962 was its newest of 22 SW1's and among 150 units on the roster. Today the URR gets by with 33 1,500 h.p. EMD switchers.

by Pittsburgh & Ohio Central (OC/G&W), and the Valley Industrial Track and the Brilliant Branch, run by AVR.

Pittsburgh, Allegheny & McKees Rocks: Extant, 5 track-miles, all within the McKees Rocks Industrial Park; it has an SW1200 still in full A&S paint.

Pittsburgh & Lake Erie: Sold to CSX's temporary entity Three Rivers Railway in 1991. McKeesport-Connellsville (now a trail) and New Castle-Youngstown segments later abandoned; remainder extant as part of CSX.

Pittsburgh & Ohio Valley: Trackage extant and in use; independent operation ended in 1993 when assets (excluding locomotives) were sold to CSX.

Pittsburgh & West Virginia: Leased by N&W in 1964, transferred to new regional Wheeling & Lake in 1990; line extant as W&LE.

Pittsburgh, Chartiers & Youghiogheny: Extant; sold in 1990's to RailTex (Later RailAmerica), operated with former CR Panhandle Division and Chartiers Secondary as Pittsburgh Industrial Railroad, which in early 2001 became OC/G&W's Pittsburgh & Ohio Central.

Union: Extant, owned by U.S. Steel; operations significantly curtailed after 1980's closures of several on-line mills.

Unity Railways: Independent opera-



Jerry Pinkepank

tion ended in 1965; abandoned in late '60's after a short period of operation as a branch of B&LE.

Youngstown & Northern: Abandoned with closure of U.S. Steel Ohio Works (ca. 1980), part of which was later reopened; enginehouse and yard tracks operated by dealer Larry's Truck Electric (LTEX).

Youngstown & Southern: Extant;

Obituary

Bert Pennypacker

Prolific rail author and photographer Charles Bertram "Bert" Pennypacker died April 22 at age 85. Pennypacker spent the 1930's and '40's in Coatesville, Pa., then, in 1953, he married and moved to Philadelphia, where he worked at a factory until retiring in 1973. Despite failing eyesight, he authored more than 200 articles and 8 books, primarily on Northeastern railroad subjects. Typical of Pennypacker's work was a piece on PRR's Broad Street Station in Philly [December 1983 *TRAINS*], for which he won a Railway & Locomotive Historical Society award. *CLASSIC TRAINS* has published 8 articles by him, and has 2 others on file for the future. Together with his photos, Pennypacker's solid, unadorned prose stands as a substantial, durable contribution to our understanding of railroad history.—Robert S. McGonigal

The friendly crew of Westinghouse 8 chats with the late Hank Goerke (right) and Dave Ingles at East Pittsburgh on March 27, 1962.

after several ownership changes, today it is part of OC/G&W system as Ohio & Pennsylvania Railroad.

In helping edit and proofread the story for this issue, Jerry Pinkepank offered to send in a photo I'd forgotten he'd taken (above), showing Hank and me chatting with Westinghouse No. 8's crew. They directed us to PRR's Pitcairn Yard, and told us of 8's sister No. 9, inside the plant. Alas, neither unit exists, having been scrapped in Sharpsburg, Pa., in the 1970's, according to Lee Gregory and Dave Hamley.—Dave Ingles

So long, Kodachrome

Just before press time came the not entirely unexpected news that Kodak was ending the production of Kodachrome transparency film. Introduced in 1935, Kodachrome, particularly in the 35mm slide format, became the favorite color film of serious railfan photographers, who prized its rich tones and archival stability. Virtually all the color images we publish are from Kodachrome slides. Now, after years of decline, the film joins the steam locomotives, early diesels, and other departed elements of the classic railroad era it documented so beautifully. ■

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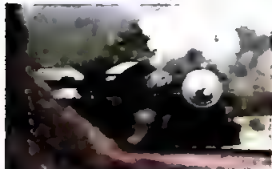
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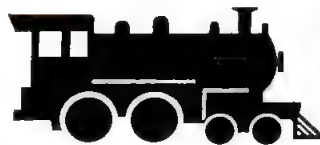
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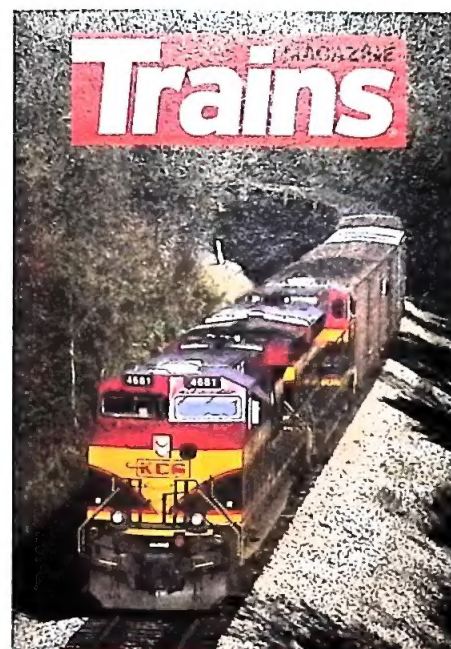
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24, 1954. (Birmingham's other passenger roads—Louisville & Nashville and Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast—each had its own station.) An unusual feature of the 10-track through-type station was a tunnel that carried the city's Fifth Avenue under the headhouse and tracks. Alas, the light-brown brick building with the great domed waiting room lasted just 60 years, being demolished in 1969 for a development that never materialized. Today vacant land and a freeway are here, the remaining tracks are freight-only, and Amtrak's *Crescent* stops at the former L&N station across downtown. **1**

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